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EMPOWERED AT DUSK

A Qualitative Study About Sex Work Activism in Kampala

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TABLE OF CONTENT

Acknowledgements	3
Acronyms	4
Abstract	5
1. Introduction	6
1.1 Purpose and aim of the study	6
1.2 Principles of social work	8
1.3. Definitions of central concepts	9
2. Background	10
2.1 Human rights in Uganda	10
2.2 Legal background	11
2.3 Sex work in Uganda	14
3. Previous Research	18
3.1 Sex work activism	18
3.2 Stigmatization of sex workers	19
3.3 Peer support	20
3.4 Field example Sonagachi	21
4. Social work theories and approaches	23
4.1 Radical and critical social work	23
4.2 Anti-Oppressive theory and practice	24
4.3 Empowerment and advocacy	25
4.4 Feminist perspective to sex work	26
5. Methods	27
5.1 Qualitative research method	27
5.2 Micro-Ethnographic research	27
5.3 Interview procedures	28
5.4 Method of analyzing	29
5.5 Validity and reliability	30
5.6 Ethical considerations	30
5.7 Limitations of the research	32
5.8 Division of the research and the results	32
5.9 How we got access to the sex work field	33

6. Mapping of the sex work activist scene	34
6.1. Actors in the field of sex work activism in Kampala	34
6.2 Sex work friendly organizations	37
6.3 The sex work activism scene	41
6.4 The hard to reach sex workers	45
7. Paralegal training	50
7.1 Becoming a paralegal	50
7.2 Positive outcomes of the paralegal training	55
7.3 Motivation to paralegal training	59
7.4 Challenges in the paralegal field	62
8. Peer support in sex work activism	67
8.1 Social work within peer support	67
8.2 Outcomes of activism	73
8.3 Motivation to activism	76
8.4 Challenges and dreams among the sex work activists	79
9. Analysis and discussion	84
9.1 Social work and activism	84
9.2 Social change	85
9.3 Motivation	86
9.4 Challenges	88
9.5 Feminism and sex work	89
9.6 Summary	90
10. Epilogue	92
References	94
Appendix 1: Interview guideline paralegals	98
Appendix 2: Interview guideline peer support	102
Appendix 3: Ugandan laws	105
Appendix 4: Introduction to the respondents	107
Appendix 5: Map of sex work organizations	109

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ACRONYMS

AHA- Anti-Homosexuality Act
AOP- Anti-Oppressive Practice
ART- Antiretroviral Therapy
APA- Anti Pornography Act
CEDAW- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
HIV- Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HRAPF- Human Rights Awareness and Promotion Forum
ICCPR- International covenant on Civil and Political Rights
ICESC- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
ILO- International Labor Organization
LGBTI- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex
MARP- Most At Risk Population
MARPI- Most At Risk Population Initiative
MSM- Men who have Sex with Men
NGO- Non-governmental Organization
PEP- Post Exposure Prophylaxis
POMA- Public Order Management Act
STI- Sexually Transmitted Infection
UGX- Uganda shilling
UHRA- Uganda Harmonized Rights Alliance
UHRC- Uganda human rights commission
UN- United Nations
UNAIDS- United Nations Joint Programme on HIV/AIDS
WHO- World Health Organization
WONETHA- Women's Organization Network for Human Rights Advocacy

ABSTRACT

Sex workers around the world have always suffered from discrimination and stigmatization. This puts them in a vulnerable situation because of little social support. In the Ugandan context, sex workers suffer from stigma due to both legal and cultural practices. Many of the sex workers in Uganda come from a low socioeconomic and educational background and enter sex work due to financial reasons. Our aim with this research is to document the sex work activist scene, mapping the actors and activities in the field in Kampala and research the different support mechanisms within the sex work community.

In the spring of 2015 we travelled to Uganda to conduct a ‘Minor field study’ in Kampala. The data we collected in Uganda is the material to this qualitative research about sex work activism in Kampala. The sex work activists have established several organizations that offer a variety of support activities with the goal to empower sex workers, to create awareness and to challenge laws about sex work. To get a grasp of the different services provided, the study is partly ethnographic. We followed the sex work activists to their events, met up with their partner organizations and were out on the field to get a picture of the sex work scene. We have done qualitative interviews focusing on two central support services that the sex work activists provide: paralegal training and peer-support. We interviewed different actors in these fields to get a broader picture of how paralegals and peer-supporters work and how these different activities have changed the sex work community.

The results indicate that there are advanced support mechanisms within the sex worker led organizations. Due to active outreach work, the sex worker led organizations have reached a considerable number of sex workers in Kampala and been able to provide them with adequate information about safer sex work. By working together with different sex work friendly organizations, they have managed to empower sex workers and create awareness about their rights in the communities they operate in. Access to free condoms and safer sex work information has improved by outreach work and through establishing cooperation with brothel owners and local chairmen. Through various peer support mechanisms the sex workers have created an effective and powerful support network. The paralegal training has radically improved the legal awareness within the sex work community. Sex work activists and their organizations have with the support from human rights lawyers been able to petition against oppressive laws and share a mutual goal of decriminalization of sex work.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose and aim of the research

You can't avoid the African beats as the evening turns to night in Kampala. The city that is constantly changing and developing has got something for everybody even at nightfall. The restaurants get filled with people who come to enjoy and some build their appetite for dancing. You can smell the delicious street foods and see how the chaotic traffic of the city slowly calms down. But for the sex workers the dusk means the beginning of a work day.

Sex work in Uganda is a fairly visible activity even with its illegal status. We, the writers of this thesis had been working with social work issues concerning sex work before. East-Africa is a fascinating part of sub-Saharan Africa, that we had both grown fond of during our previous travels and non-profit work. In our previous trips to East-Africa, sex work has been very visible, and a phenomenon that fascinated us. We got the idea to write about sex workers peer support in Kampala, which would combine our interest of harm-reduction ideology in social work with an East-African context.

Our hypothesis was that sex workers have unofficial networks and methods of cooperation that aim at safer sex work. We were interested to explore those support mechanisms and how peer support works in practice in Kampala. As we started to look into it we realized that sex work movement in Uganda is both broad and diverse, covering different arenas where sex workers have come together to claim a better life. The peer support is done through passionate activists and their sex worker led non-governmental organizations. They work in different levels of the society in order to fight stigma and discrimination against sex workers and have built a multi professional network around to join the cause. To only study peer-support felt limiting all of a sudden and the focus shifted to study the activism-movement among the sex workers in general. Our target group became the sex work activists and the key organizations where the activists operate in Kampala, the capital of Uganda. We understood that the sex work activist movement needs to become academically recognized and the actors and peer support activities and interventions documented.

We had before our arrival contacted sex work leaders and were hoping to get entrance to their way of working. With the subject we had chosen, it was clear we could only do this study if we had the trust of the sex workers. We had no clear picture of how the sex worker led organizations worked, and after the first meeting with sex work activists, we were more than impressed by the highly developed movements among sex work activists and their strong commitment to seek social justice. What also amazed us among the sex work activist was their close cooperation with the LGBTI-activists. These two stigmatized groups have come together to claim their rights to exist. Even though this study will not focus on the LGBTI-movement, they are connected and many of the NGOs work on these issues together and we will take that into account. Our weeks of data collection in Uganda were intense and explorative. We were following the sex work activists for weeks to get a picture of how they work. For a marginalized and discriminated group like sex workers in Kampala coming together to claim rights is a surviving technique.

Our aim with this study is to get a broad picture of the sex work movement, how they work, who they work with and what kind of impacts their work as activists has had. In order to really grasp the sex work activism scene, we have mixed different research methods. This thesis is therefore partly ethnographic. We followed sex workers to their different activities,

and they introduced us to important actors on the field. During this process, the mapping-part, we both got interested in the different support activities that the sex workers had developed. We chose one activity each, and did a part each that was done with qualitative interviews. The result-part is therefore divided into three parts, one being the mapping part, where we will introduce some of the sex work movements important actors, the second part is about their legal aid, paralegal training, and the third part is about the peer-support.

This thesis will shed light on the actors and scene of sex work activism in Kampala, in order to map out the sex work movement like it hasn't been done before. During our research, we got inspired by the peer-support mechanisms and interventions done in the Kampala sex work scene. We studied the services that the activists and their sex worker led organizations in cooperation with other allies are providing to the most vulnerable sex workers of the city. We will explain the linkage between social work interventions and the work the activists do on the field and analyze the impacts of sex work activist movement from grassroots level to greater social change. Why is this study important? We need knowhow of reaching and supporting the marginalized and stigmatized group of sex workers. As social workers, we felt we had much to learn from the sex workers, and we also felt they were already doing social work, using techniques and methods we wanted to learn from.

Social work is not only done by social workers. The working practices and social work the sex work activists do can be considered paraprofessionals of social work. In the absence of professional social workers, the sex work activists have developed their own methods of social work. In that sense, this research also questions traditional social work, or at least, recognizes its limitations. Our research shows that activists can provide high quality social work, and it is therefore worth questioning our role as experts. Recognition of the work can hopefully lead to new ways of doing social work, developing mutual learning, as well as new networks and cooperation's in the future, in order to promote safer sex work and human rights to sex workers in practice.

The purpose of our research is to get a better understanding about sex work activism in Kampala, the roots that arise to action, who are the people who risk their own wellbeing in order to seek social justice. We want to document the activist movement in Kampala through the voices of sex workers themselves and learn how they get empowered at dusk.

Main questions

We decided to divide the thesis into two parts. The first is an ethnographic and exploratory mapping of the sex work activism in Kampala region that gives a broad picture of the actors and actions in this field. The main research questions in the first part are:

- Who are the actors in the field of sex work activism in Kampala?
- What are the activities of sex work activists in Kampala?

The aim is to understand how the sex work activist movement works in Kampala and how they are connected to other actors in the field. The data is collected from our field notes and complemented with comments from the interviews with the activists.

The second part of the thesis will be focusing on the empowerment aspect of the activities and interventions of sex work activists. We will focus on two case examples which we want to understand more in depth. The study will be conducted by semi-structured qualitative

interviews with people who are engaged with the activities. This includes the activists, partnership organizations and sex workers who participate in the activities. In this part we will not only look at the cases from an empowerment perspective but also explore how these cases can be seen from a social work point of view. The main research questions for the second part of the study are:

- How can the activities done by sex work activists in Kampala be understood in terms of social work theories and principles?
- How has sex work activism created social change in the field for sex workers in Kampala? What are the methods that they have used? Has the activism changed the reality for sex workers and how?

1.2 Principles of social work

One important part of our thesis is how we look at the activists from a social work point of view. To get a deeper understanding of how their work can be defined as ‘social work’ we need to understand what social work is. The global definition of social work is a key document of how social work could be performed all over the world. It can be seen as a guideline in order to remind social workers how to work and why. Social work is widely thought as a practice based profession with an academic background, the global definition of social work includes principles of social justice, human rights, empowerment and liberation. The conventions of human rights are interlinked with the definition of social work. The principles of social work are the respect of the worth of all human beings. To be conscious and critical about the different structural differences among humans and to be able to reflect on the inequalities and oppressions that are parts of the society is important in social work. A social worker should advocate for the oppressed and disadvantaged people with a goal to liberate and empower people. Social workers should not work for oppressed and disadvantaged people, but with them, in all different layers of the society, in order to create a more inclusive and open society where everyone is respected (IFSW and IASSW, 2004). There are also ethical principles of social work that may or may not conflict with the society and the norms. In social work, there are many ethical challenges; these are a few of them that are relevant to our research:

- The conflict of interest between for instance state and oppressed people. To work with marginalized and discriminated groups can create tension in the society.
- The role of the social worker as both the controllers and the helpers.
- The limited resources (IFSW, 2012).

However, the ethical challenges in social work vary from country to country. In the Ugandan context, the ethical conflicts are as many as the challenges of actually following the global definition of social work. Human rights, social justice and social work have to be combined for a successful outcome. Human rights are not only there to protect the human dignity, but they also give a global legal framework through declarations and conventions. Sex work activists are human rights activists and the struggle is with implementing these rights into practice when it comes to sex workers in Uganda. In order to follow the principles of social

work, one will challenge the Ugandan society, both the laws and the culture. The consequences of those who do promote marginalized groups will have to pay a high prize.

As social workers we got inspired to write this thesis about social work support done by sex work activists in Uganda, because it challenges our idea of social work and the way to deliver services. This is a thesis about how social work can be done in a radical and inspiring way; it's about peer-support, activism, sex work and seeking social justice and most of all about solidarity and hope.

1.3 Definitions of central concepts

Sex worker

In this thesis we are using the term “sex worker” when we refer to people who sell or exchange sexual services for money or other goods. This is a term that is widely used by the sex workers themselves and is less stigmatizing than the word “prostitute”. Flexibility and variability of the term sex work helps to explain the sexual labor and also show its similarities to other work. Sex work is not always a steady activity and can be parallel to other kind of income generating work (Kempadoo and Doezema, 1998). Kempadoo and Doezema (1998 p.3) explain the term more respectful also since it *“suggest that we view prostitution not as an identity –a social or a psychological characteristic of women ... but as income –generating activity or form of labor for women and men”*.

Activism

The work that the sex workers do to change and challenge the Ugandan society is activism. Activism can be defined as fighting for a cause in a way that is not conventional. It can be about questioning norms as much as promoting rights. Most of the time, activism is done by people with less power, done on a grass-root level (Encyclopedia of Activism and Social Justice). Activism can be done in many different ways. The sex work activism in Uganda can be seen as a form of resistance-movement and a social protest and resistance can be seen as a response to power. Resistance should not be seen as a form of creating power, but as a reaction to power with the goal of undermining the existing power. The movements are often created because of dissatisfaction with a goal of either change or replace the institutions or, in our case, the political situation. Since the sex workers and the LGBTI-people already have a strong stigma and are constantly victims of severe discrimination, one can say that they have very little to lose on becoming activists. To unite and demand the rights they don't have is a way to survive for them. The oppressing power can't exist if the activists or the victims no longer feel fear (Hardt and Negri, 2013). Social movement is defined as something done by ordinary people in order to change some aspects of their life (Goodwin and Jasper, 2015). The protest movement of sex workers that we have studied is a non-violent movement, using both legal and illegal ways to create a more open society. The movement works through mainly open networks, but since it is illegal to be LGBTI, some of the networks are informal. The goal of activism is often legal, social and political rights (Goodwin and Jasper, 2015). In this thesis we refer to sex work activists when we talk about sex workers that are activist in their own field of work.

CHAPTER TWO: BACKGROUND

This background chapter will lead us to the topic of sex work activism. We will give a brief background to human rights and the legal framework of sex work in Uganda. Later in this chapter we will shortly introduce other legal models like decriminalization, legalization and the buyers criminalization considering sex work. The last part gives an introduction to sex work in Uganda. To clarify; even though our thesis is gender neutral, the research that was available about sex work in this case was only focused in women. That is why sex workers in this chapter and the chapter about previous research are also referred to as *women*, but the rest of our research focuses on all sex workers.

2.1 Human rights in Uganda

The conventions concerning sex workers

Uganda has ratified the three central human rights covenants and conventions that protect sex workers; International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESC), The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). These three human rights conventions together with the Declaration of Human Rights form a base for promotion of sex workers' rights (Mgbako and Smith, 2011). Uganda has signed and ratified the African charter on Human and people's rights (achpr.org). Uganda has its constitution, which is also focusing on the Ugandans' freedom. We will discuss the constitution more later on. In the sex work context, the interpretation of the actual conventions can be different, and some articles work against others. Articles that could be used to the sex workers' benefit are:

- Article 1 in ICESC and ICCPR, the right to self-determination
- Article 6 in ICESC, the right to work
- Article 7 in ICESC, the rights to favorable work condition (OHCHR)

There is however, one article that can be seen as a disadvantage for sex workers:

- Article 6 in CEDAW, the state's obligation to take appropriate measures to suppress exploitation of prostitution of women (OHCHR).

One can see that there are not any specific conventions covering sex workers. However, during the time we were writing the thesis, the discussion became very relevant. Amnesty International came with the announcement that sex work should be seen as work. They made it clear it is not because they want to promote sex work, but rather in order to protect those who sell sex. They came out with a protocol, "Decision on state obligations to respect, protect and fulfill the human rights of sex workers" (2015a). This document has 13 articles, article one stating that a decriminalization would make the sex workers less vulnerable to human right violation and that the states should repeal laws that make the sex workers vulnerable (Amnesty 2015a). Swedish Amnesty voted against this protocol, one of the reasons being how the Swedish society looks at sex work. This will be discussed further in another chapter.

Human rights awareness in Uganda

One of Human Rights Awareness and Promotion Forums (HRAPF) goal in their work is to promote human rights awareness in Uganda. They have, in co-operation with other organizations, done several reports of how human rights are implemented and how aware the public is about human rights. The level of knowledge about human rights is relatively low in Uganda. In a study done by HRAPF only 10% of the people participating in the study could

define human rights. However, a majority could describe at least one human right, the right to education was the most known. The study also shows a notable difference concerning knowledge about human rights between the rural and the urban areas (people in urban areas tend to have more knowledge) and among people with or without higher education (HRAPF, 2011).

The Ugandan constitution

The government established the Ugandan constitution 1995. It was supposed to strengthen human rights and create awareness. The constitution focuses on the Ugandan people's rights and the government's responsibility towards the people. The constitution covers many rights, such as the principles of democracy, the right to cultural diversity, human dignity, the right for disabled people, the right to education, right to religion, right to basic health care to name a few (Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, 1995). Under the constitution, Uganda Human Rights Commission (UHRC) was also established. It was established to be a permanent organization monitoring human rights in the country. One of their duties is to promote human rights. UHRC has several different human right awareness programs for different actors in the society. For instance, they have different programs with the police, state defenders, media and education. They are supposed to have regional office in all the districts, when HRAPF did the study, only 9 out of 112 districts had a local office (HRAPF, 2011).

Human right challenges in Uganda

In reality, Uganda has passed several laws recently that directly go against the human rights stated in the constitution, one of them being Public Order Management Act (POMA), which was passed in 2013. POMA regulates public meetings, which could be any public gatherings, and gives the police wide power to regulate public meetings. It violates the freedom of expression, association and the right to peaceful assembly (Amnesty, 2014). One of the most serious human right violations in Uganda is restriction on civil liberties, which means, restriction on media, freedom of assembly and association and discrimination on marginalized groups (United States Department of State, 2014). During our weeks in Uganda, many of our informants and their friends were also victims of arbitrary arrests.

HRAPF's study also points out that raising awareness of human rights is mostly done by NGOs and not by the state, but UHRC has programs in different areas of the country. Both UHRC and NGOs state that the biggest challenges in their work are both funding and resistance from the government (HRAPF, 2011).

In general, one can say that there is a legislation protecting the people and promoting human rights. However the knowledge about human rights is low among the public and is not widely used by the police, political leaders and other important actors. This makes the human rights hard to implement. UHRC, which is supposed to protect the human rights and create awareness, is linked to the government which can create problems. Also, with the new laws passing, that are counterproductive to the constitution of Uganda, such as APA and POMA, it gets even harder for the people to claim and fight for their human rights.

2.2 Legal background

A guide to the legal field of sex work in a broader context

The laws concerning sex work varies a lot from country to country. The laws often stem from the norms of sexuality of the specific country (Dodillet, 2009). The norms of sex work have changed over the years. In general, one can divide sex work into two different theoretical

paradigms; the empowerment paradigm and the oppression paradigm. In the empowerment paradigm, the sex workers' freedom and advocacy is highlighted, while in the oppression paradigm, sex work is considered oppressing and negative to the whole society, especially people's sexuality (Holmström, 2015).

The laws concerning sex work can be divided into three groups.

1. **Criminalization.** Sex work is regulated by laws and seen as crime. Sex work is either completely illegal, or partly illegal. Partly illegal means for instance there are laws criminalizing pimping or trafficking. Countries in Europe where sex work is completely illegal are Serbia and Rumania. Countries in Europe that have laws that partly limits sex work are the Nordic countries, France and UK.
2. **Legalization** gives the sex worker legal rights against the client, considering selling sex as a business contract. Examples are Germany and the Netherlands.
3. The third way is **decriminalization**. With decriminalization, the laws controlling or forbidding sex work are abolished or not exercised (Holmström, 2015). Decriminalization will be discussed more later on in this chapter.

The Swedish model differs from many other laws concerning sex work. The model was developed during the 1990s and meant to be a law protecting sex workers and punishing buyers (Dodillet, 2009). The Swedish sex law act was entered 1999 and has been up to debate since. The Swedish model is the first law that only criminalizes the buyers and not the sellers. The Swedish model has a background in the norms of women selling sex being victims; sex work being a way for men to control women's sexuality (Holmström, 2015). It is the society's responsibility to protect these women for their own good. The law is not about protecting or strengthening the sex workers, but diminishing the phenomenon of sex work (Dodillet, 2009). The purpose was to create a normative change in how to look at sex work with the goal to decrease sex work (Holmström, 2015).

Another group of laws that affect sex workers in Sweden and many other countries are the so called "pimping laws". The pimping laws limit the sex workers and often make them more vulnerable and stigmatized. For instance, if a landlord finds out that the tenant is a sex worker he/she has to evict the tenant, or otherwise be charged with pimping (Dodillet, 2009).

Germany however, had a prostitution law in year 2002 which legalizes sex work and differs from the Swedish law. The German law focuses more on the sex workers rights. In Germany, sex work is legal. When the law came in action, they also changed the old law, criminalizing "promotion of prostitution" and changed it to "exploiting prostitutes". The first and second paragraph gives the sex workers the right to claim payment. It also tries to decrease the pimps influence by stating it is the seller who should get the payment. This way the sex workers positions should be strengthened. The third paragraph gives the sex workers right to social security (Dodillet, 2009). These two laws were made during the same period of time, but with two very different agendas. The Swedish law tries to remove sex work while the German one tries to strengthen sex workers. Both are strongly linked to moral and culture and strongly affect the sex workers' lives and their work (Dodillet, 2009).

Another alternative to these two laws is decriminalization. With decriminalization, one does not have to take a moral stand about sex work as work. It does not welcome sex work, but accepts the phenomenon and gives the sex workers a legal status, making it possible for them to benefit from social security. Through decriminalization there are no laws that criminalize sex work. It can however be controlled. Using laws about rape and sexual molesting protects the sex workers from being abused. There can also be specific rules about who can open a

brothel and rights for sex workers to say no. But there cannot be any laws where sex work can be punished by law (Dodillet, 2009). Decriminalization was what most of the sex work activists we came across wanted. It would give the sex workers both security and freedom to continue working and at the same time decrease discrimination and stigma.

The Ugandan laws affecting sex workers

Uganda's criminal laws are described in the Penal Code Act 1950. There are several laws in the Penal Code Act that can be addressed on sex workers. As a complement to the Penal Code Act, there have also been new laws coming into force that affect sex workers, such as the Anti-Pornography Act (APA) which was passed 2014.

In Uganda it is illegal to sell sex. It is described in Penal Code chapter 139; *"Any person who practices or engages in prostitution commits an offence and is liable to imprisonment for seven years"*.

In chapter 138, a prostitute is defined; *"'prostitute' means a person who, in public or elsewhere, regularly or habitually holds himself or herself out as available for sexual intercourse or other sexual gratification for monetary or other material gain..."*.

(The Ugandan Penal Code Act 1950)

In chapter 137 of the Penal Code Act brothels are criminalized. Another law limiting sex workers is chapter 136; *"person living on earnings of prostitution"*. This law makes it illegal to live on earnings of prostitution. It is however more extensive than a regular pimping-law, *"Every person who knowingly lives wholly or in part on the earnings of prostitution...commits an offence and is liable to imprisonment for seven years"* (The Ugandan Penal Code Act 1950). The law basically makes it illegal for a sex worker to support his/her family on money made of prostitution. Therefore, a child or an old parent who is supported by a sex worker is committing a crime.

The law that is mostly used to target sex workers is chapter 168 of the Penal Code Act, the rogue and vagabond law. This law is very vague; *"person found wandering in or upon or near any premises or in any road or highway or any place adjacent thereto or in any public place at such time and under such circumstances as to lead to the conclusion that such person is there for an illegal or disorderly purpose..."* (The Ugandan Penal Code Act 1950). Anyone looking suspicious or walking around without a clear aim can be arrested for rogue and vagabond. This makes the law very attractive for the police and is the law mostly used when arresting sex workers.

The implementation and interpretation of the Ugandan laws

The above-mentioned laws can be seen as the biggest threat to the sex workers. Although the laws are very clear, during our research we came to realize that it is also how the laws are interpreted by the public that affects the sex workers ability to work. As an example, during our stay in Uganda, a proposal of criminalizing the buyers was put forward. Even though this was just a suggestion, it immediately changed the sex work scene and the buyers became less visible.

Another example of a law that is easily misunderstood is APA. The earlier drafts of the act included displaying sexual parts, such as breasts and thighs. However, this was taken away and the final version of the act "only" criminalizes pornography (Amnesty, 2014). Pornography is defined as: *"any representation through publication, exhibition, cinematography, indecent show, information technology or whatever means, of a person*

engaged in real or stimulated explicit sexual activities or any representation of sexual parts of a person for primarily sexual excitement”(APA, 2014).

The act is very vague and because of the earlier draft it affects also sex workers. Even though the part of dressing was taken away, it is still called the mini-skirt-law by the public. The media, who apparently was not up to date, also spread the misunderstandings, describing it as a law criminalizing revealing clothing (Amnesty, 2014). Uganda is a country where the interpretation of a law is as relevant as the actual law, it is a country with mob-justice, where people many times feel the need to take the law into their own hands. In the end, APA therefore came to affect sex workers and women in general in their ability to dress as they want. How the laws are used in practice and how they affect the sex workers will be discussed more deeply in the result chapter.

2.3 Sex work in Uganda

UNAIDS defines sex work as ”the exchange of money or goods for sexual services, either regularly or occasionally [...] where the sex worker may or may not consciously define such activity as income generating” (UNAIDS 2011). The report done by HIV/AIDS KMCC (2014) explains how it is difficult to estimate the number of sex workers in Uganda, they have looked at several different studies and numbers have varied a lot. One of the reasons why it is difficult to estimate the number of sex workers is the unclear definition of ‘sex worker’. UNAIDS definition is very broad and women might not define themselves as sex workers. Women trading sexual service for goods do not always define themselves as sex workers and women working at hotels or bars, selling sex as a complement, will not always define themselves as such either. Most of the time, it is the women working at brothels or on the street who are more likely to define themselves as sex workers (Ibid).

HIV/AIDS KMCC (2014) also mention another category of sex workers that might not define themselves as such: transactional sex work. Transactional sex work is more often done in an existing relationship and the transactional sex worker has a limited amount of clients, often only one. The motives of these relationships are different; some of them do it in order to survive while others are young women having relationships with rich men in order to pursue a luxurious lifestyle. Transactional sex is also common among university students.

With these different definitions of sex work it is, as mentioned before, difficult to get an accurate number of sex workers. Another challenge is the mobility among sex workers. Some of them move from country to country and some from village to village. Research done in 2014 by The Uganda AIDS commission calculates the number of sex workers to 54 549 persons in Uganda. But this number is however questionable, since it is up to the sex workers to define themselves as such. Which means that women who most likely have other part-time jobs as well, will probably not say that they are sex workers. The studies trying to calculate the number of sex workers in Kampala have given different outcomes. One study estimated a number of 7000 sex workers, while other studies estimate a higher number, up to 26 000 sex workers in Kampala (HIV/AIDS KMCC, 2014).

Who are the sex workers in Uganda?

According to HIV/AIDS KMCC (2014), the numbers of sex workers in Uganda is growing especially in the urban areas. Sex workers are mostly concentrated in commercial areas, around big roads and fishing sites. The average time to work as a sex worker in Uganda is three years. They often have a lower education than average. 73 percent of the women in

Uganda have achieved primary education, compared to 53 percent among sex workers. Many of the sex workers have relationships on the side. Almost 13 percent of female sex workers are married, and 43 percent have been married. Women selling sex may have other incomes as well. In one study, including women who do not define themselves as sex workers, 66 percent of the women trading sex for goods had another income as well. 18 percent of them worked in a bar and found their clients there as well. 9% defined themselves as self-employed and having a small business such as a market stand or worked as a domestic worker as well.

The locations and the clients

HIV/AIDS KMCC (2014) mentions many sex workers in Uganda take their first step into selling sex on the streets. Attractive streets to sell sex are often near bars and hotels. Other common places to sell sex are in bars. You can find female sex workers in all kinds of bars, targeting both high income and low income men. Also lodges attract sex workers. Some of these lodges also function as brothels, where the owner of the lodge owner is involved in the business. Places that attract high numbers of sex workers are called hotspots. Some of the hotspots are along the roads, targeting truck drivers, others are in more commercial settings. Other common hotspots are around lodges, bars, hotels and restaurants. In small towns, hotspots are normally along the big roads. The clients of sex workers vary a lot. Two of the big client groups HIV/AIDS KMCC (2014) highlight are truck drivers and fishermen. There is a big population of fishermen in Uganda, however, the competition of the fishing business in Lake Victoria is high due to decreasing numbers of fish. Women, dependent on the income from fishing, will exchange sex for fish and sell it on the market. These women are in the category transactional sex.

Why do they sell sex?

The report done by HIV/AIDS KMCC (2014) shows that most women engaging in sex work do it mainly because of financial reasons. Many of the Kampala sex workers come from poor socioeconomic backgrounds and have trouble finding a job to support them. Many of these women do not come from Kampala originally, but have moved from the countryside in order find a better future. They normally start doing low income jobs, in restaurants, as housemaids or in bars. When the money is not enough they start selling sex. Many of them have peers, coworkers or friends who are already selling sex who help them engage in it. Peer support is an important part of entering sex work. 30 percent of the sex workers were recommended by peers who helped them into the business (Ibid).

The women coming from the countryside do not move into the city only for financial reasons. Other reasons may be that they don't see a future for themselves in the village and dream of a more exciting life in the city, some have the belief that sex work is easy money, others fancy a luxurious lifestyle in the big city as high end sex workers, and then there are those who leave their villages because of family issues. HIV/AIDS KMCC (2014) also explains how women who engage in sex work might see it as an option to get financial and social independence. Sex work can be an attractive alternative to what the traditional African lifestyle can offer. The gender roles in Uganda are not very liberal, giving women from poor socioeconomic backgrounds few options other than becoming wives and mothers. For women who don't want to spend their life cleaning, washing and taking care of children, sex work can be an attractive option to get away from the traditional life. Becoming a sex worker increases their independence and autonomy and makes them less dependent on a man to provide for them.

HIV and other challenges sex workers face in Uganda

HIV/AIDS KMCC (2014) emphasize that the growing number of sex workers in Uganda is a concern for the spreading of HIV in the country. They therefor claim it is a national interest to support the sex workers in order to keep the national level of new infections down. The highest number of infected sex workers comes from the 80s, where 80 percent of the sex workers in Kampala were infected. Due to interventions, these numbers decreased over the years. In 2000, the numbers of infected sex workers were down to 28 percent. However, the number of infected sex workers is increasing again, and so is the national level of infected people as well. The latest research is from 2011, showing that 37 percent of the sex workers are infected with HIV.

The knowledge about safe sex varies among sex workers. However it is not only the level of knowledge that is an issue, but also the attitude towards condoms. In a study from 2013, over 90% of sex workers agreed that condom use is the best method of STI prevention. However, 28% also answered that condoms kills the mood for sex. The price when it comes to buy sex is often determined whether they use a condom or not. Unprotected sex will cost more (HIV/AIDS KMCC, 2014). HIV/AIDS KMCC (2014) describes another issue is the fact that female sex workers in Uganda are not a homogenous group. The risk of getting HIV is also dependent on the background, what the settings of sex work are and which clients they target. Sex workers who can afford saying no to unprotected sex have a lower risk of getting HIV. Therefore, sex workers mainly targeting high income men generally have a lower risk of getting HIV.

One of the big obstacles when it comes to HIV infections among sex workers is, according to HIV/AIDS KMCC (2014), the criminalization. The criminalization makes the sex workers easy targets to stigma and in the end also creates more marginalization which increases the sex workers' vulnerability toward the society and makes their chances of getting HIV higher than other groups. With the stigma and the laws working against them, sex workers are a group in the society that have more difficulties getting health care, legal and social services. This will be discussed further on when studying earlier research.

HIV/AIDS KMCC (2014) mentions that another challenge is the access to friendly health care providers. There are many health clinics that refuse to treat and counsel sex workers, which will also make sex workers in general more reluctant to get health service. Many sex workers in the study had experienced abuse and hostile staff at health centers. There are health centers that refuse to test sex workers for STIs, refuse to give them medications and/or blaming the sex workers for their STIs. This tends to make sex workers not going to health clinics and in the end put their health more at risk. Friendly and competent health care is crucial for sex workers and the fight against HIV since sex workers in general are in higher risk. It is although worth mentioning that there are several sex work friendly health care clinics, especially in Kampala. Another challenge for sex workers and for the fight against HIV is substance abuse among sex workers. There are a high number of alcohol and other substances abusers among sex workers in Kampala. 39 percent of the sex workers use some kind of stimulating substances, such as alcohol or marijuana. This can make the sex worker less aware of warning signs and also increase the risks of having unprotected sex.

The environment for sex workers is also a dangerous scene. Being raped and abused is common among sex workers and is more common among the younger inexperienced ones. The number of rapes among sex workers is alarming. HIV/AIDS KMCC (2014) estimate that an average sex worker gets raped about five times during their time as a sex worker. Many times the rapes are taken place when a client refuses to wear a condom. Other studies

conclude that 31% of the sex workers in Kampala have been molested by clients. Few sex workers go to the police to report such crimes. One of the reasons is their relationship to the police. Sex workers also get abused by the police. 38 percent of the sex workers in Kampala have been molested and abused by the police and other security staff.

There are several programs and organizations in Uganda addressing sex workers. The purpose is often safer sex, health care and legal aid. In our thesis we will mention some of them. These organizations also organize activities and outreaches. There have also been policies adopted at state level to prevent HIV spread among sex workers. However, an issue is the criminalization of sex work, since many of these projects challenge the Penal Code Act, which will be discussed more later on in this thesis.

CHAPTER THREE: PREVIOUS RESEARCH

Overview

The literature review was primarily performed by conducting searches in databases from the Gothenburg Universities library-catalogue. Using ProQuest Social Sciences, we were able to search in different databases at the same time, mostly using Social Service Abstract. The searches were performed in different blocks. In an early stage, we realized “sex work” was not a useful word, so prostitution became the key word that was used in most searches. Aside from “prostitution,” we also used several different keywords in different combination to run the searches. Key words were “Empowerment” “Activism” “Peer to Peer” “Stigma” and “AIDS”.

Most of the results concerning sex work, especially in Africa, were linked to HIV. Sex work activism consists mostly of studies done in the west. Our key findings in the literature research were often closely linked together. Activism and peer support goes hand in hand, and so does the challenge of the stigma. Some of our findings are presented here.

3.1 Sex work activism

Mathieu (2003) examines different sex work movements. In the debate about sex workers, Mathieu (2003) explains that the sex workers, themselves, are usually excluded. They are often portrayed as passive victims unable to express their own opinions and needs. Instead, they have to accept having other people advocate for them, therefore defining their needs and goals. When the sex workers’ own voices are not heard, the debates are shaped by other outsiders: organizations, politicians and media. Many of the movements led by outside organizations will, therefore, not always be beneficial to the sex workers and their movements.

Yenwen (2005) explains that even though these organizations claim they support sex workers’ right to self-determination, the focus is mostly on stopping forced sex work and not on improving sex workers’ rights. Yenwen (2005) stresses that the debate about sex work should change focus from the discussion about consent and no consent to a discussion purely advocating sex work as work. Mathieu (2003) explains how sex workers coming together as activists in order to claim their rights are not a new phenomenon, but sadly many of the movements have been short-lived. The low amount of activism among sex workers globally can be explained by the many obstacles that sex workers face. Some of the most crucial parts are legislation and the U.N.’s conservative position on sex work (Mathieu, 2003). Professional pride plays a key role in resistance and social movement (Basu and Dutta, 2008).

Things are changing, however, and many human right organizations are starting to recognize sex workers’ rights. When Amnesty (Amnesty, 2015b) announced they wanted to recognize sex work as legitimate work, and sex workers’ rights as human rights, they were not the first human rights organization to do so. Other prominent organizations on the sex workers’ side also want to recognize sex work as work. Examples of these organizations are ILO, UNAIDS, WHO and Human Rights Watch.

Mathieu (2003) has looked into several sex work movements and why they have had difficulty in achieving results. First of all, Mathieu (2003) emphasizes the difficulty in mobilizing a group like sex workers. In order to actually create a social movement, they need to mobilize large numbers of sex workers. As in all other types of movements, there need to

be both strong leaders as well as followers. Finding good leaders among the sex work activists can be a challenge. Sex workers are, according to Mathieu, often a group with few resources, requiring that they must find the “*less deprived ones of these derived people*” (Mathieu, 2003, p.40). Mathieu (2003) further explains that in order to create a successful movement, there is a need to connect with other activist movements with complementary resources, such as funding or experience. Despite this, we think there is a problem looking at sex workers as being a resourceless group. We have found several good examples of sex work movements that have challenged societal pressure. The legislation and stigma is still there, but sex work activism has changed the reality for many sex workers. We will mention two examples:

Yenwen (2005) looked at the sex work movement in Tapei in 1997. There, the government decided to close down licensed brothels that had existed for decades. The sex workers came together to protest, and other women and labor activists joined in. With the support from other activists, the discussion about sex work as work got a lot of attention in media. The movement did not successfully keep the brothels from closing, but it created the first sex work group in Taiwan, which still fights for decriminalization and de-stigmatization.

Basu and Dutta (2008) looked at the Sonagachi project, which is viewed as one of the most recognized sex work projects, and a cornerstone in sex work rights movements. A discussion of that project will be discussed more thoroughly later on. Mostly, the combination of many different methods proved to be the most successful. But one important part was the sex workers mobilization. The cooperation between the sex workers empowered them and encouraged them to fight against injustice and violence. Working together, they managed to resist clients who refused to use condoms. They also managed to challenge injustice among police and politicians (Basu and Dutta, 2008). Social movements, leading to empowerment among sex workers, has led to an increase in condom use and positive health and social outcomes (Blanchard, Mohan, Shahmanesh, Prakash, Shajy, Ramesh, Bhattacharjee, Gurnani, Moses and Blanchard, J. 2013).

3.2 Stigmatization of sex workers

Research has shown (Basu and Dutta, 2008) that stigma is something that always follows sex workers, and one of the biggest reasons why sex work activism is important. One of the reasons we use the term “sex worker,” and not “prostitute” is that sex workers usually see the term “sex worker” as less stigmatizing. In order to fight stigma, Bandyopadhyay, Gayen, Debnath, Bose, Das, Biswas, Sarkar, Singh, Bibi, Mitra, and Biswas, (2006) claims that there must be a change in how we look at sex work. The social norms about selling sex have to be challenged, and sex work seen as legitimate work. Instead of being seen as victims, sex workers need to be given tools for advocacy and self-determination in order to take control over their lives. Pardasani (2004) claims that it is only through legislation and accepting sex work as a profession that the epidemic of HIV among sex workers can be reduced.

One can problematize the view of sex workers as solely victims; not all sex workers need to be saved. Bandyopadhyay et al. (2006) studied a sex work organization in West Bengal. The women in the study had, many times, been victims of trafficking, but were now free sex workers. Most of the women stayed in the sex work industry, however the reasons were not brothel owners, drug abuse or debts; it was the strong stigma that came with being a sex worker. All the respondents in Bandyopadhyay et al. (2006) study claimed it was the stigma that made their lives vulnerable, not the work itself. Organizations working on saving trafficking victims were not the main reason they had gotten out of trafficking; it was the

support by other sex workers. Waiting passively to be saved was not as effective as using agency and self-determination. The organizations saving trafficking victims never asked the sex workers what they wanted, but assumed they needed to be rescued. The stigma only strengthens when organizations run by the middle class try to save the “poor exploited women.” Bandyopadhyay et al. (2006) claims that instead, the focus should be on capacity building in the sex work community, and that anti-trafficking interventions should be held by sex work-led organizations. If sex workers and trafficking-victims gain self-determination, they can together challenge the norms and the stigma, which would reduce the marginalization and the view of sex workers as victims of their circumstances. Newman (2003) claims that one of the aims with fighting stigma should be legal and social recognition. In any interventions done on marginalized groups, one has to address the powerlessness and stigma that are attached to the groups. Otherwise, intervention will be meaningless (Pardasani, 2004).

Yenwen (2005) also claims that one of the biggest challenges for sex workers in order to fight the stigma is to stop dividing sex work between voluntary and forced. There is a strong stigma attached to those who are “forced” into sex work because of financial reasons. Poverty is one of the strongest reasons to enter into sex work. But poverty also makes people enter other jobs where they are being used and exploited, like domestic work or garbage collectors. Sex workers might sell sex because they are poor, but it doesn’t mean they are forced to do it. It can be an active choice, where sex work is the most attractive option. Yenwen (2005) emphasizes that seeing sex worker purely as helpless victims will, in the end, not help them. Sex workers who are not “forced by poverty” also suffer from a stigma, although it might look a bit different. These sex workers will be labeled as “gold diggers” or “vain,” but Yenwen (2005) asks why sex workers should be more criticized than other gold diggers. Yenwen (2005) claims that the only way to fight the sex work stigma is by normalizing sex work and seeing it as actual work, rather than focusing on whether sex workers have been forced into it or not.

3.3 Peer support

Cornish and Campbell (2009) explain that peer support is a community-based intervention program that is used all over the world. It is known to be useful among hard to reach populations and has been most commonly used among young people. Sarafian (2010) mentions how the definition of a peer is someone that can be regarded as an equal in some way. It can be through education, socioeconomic status, or occupation. The definition of a peer education is where a group of people that have some sort of equality, such as socioeconomic, sexual orientation or same ethnicity, share stories and information within the group.

Cornish and Campbell (2009) emphasize that peer support is commonly used among sex workers, and most of the research focuses on peer support concerning HIV and other STIs. In Africa, 60 % of the HIV prevention programs run by NGO’s are using peer support as a method. It is worth mentioning that the results have varied extensively in different peer support programs, and that there are many different factors that need to be taken into consideration in order to be successful and reach the target groups. Sarafian (2010) describes several different peer support programs with different results: research done among sex workers in Ghana and Dominican Republic, where peer support was used to increase condom use, showed a positive outcome. Not only did the use of condoms increase, but also the knowledge about STI’s increased as well.

Another study done in Malawi showed mixed results. The high mobility among some of the peer education had a negative effect on the program. However, in those areas where the peer support program didn't suffer these challenges, the program had a positive outcome. Other studies have shown a positive outcome using peer education as a part of a bigger intervention program. A project that was done in the Philippines where they combined both peer education and sex work managers (such as pimps and brothel owners) showed a better result than only using peer education alone (Cornish and Campbell, 2009).

Swendeman, Basu, Das, Jana, Rotheram-Borus (2009) explains it can be difficult to see what successful peer education includes. The Sonagachi project, which will be further discussed in next section, uses peer education as a part of the project. But Swendeman et al. (2009) also mentions that the key to success was the combination of interventions on both macro and micro level. Cornish and Campbell (2009) emphasize that a successful peer education program might need more interventions than just peer education. There needs to be a communication with stakeholders and all problems needs to be addressed, not just STI's. Furthermore, it has to be developed with the community in concerns.

3.4 Field example Sonagachi

Newman (2003) explains in his article how the Sonagachi-project was created as a harm-reduction project in 1992. The reason behind it was the rapidly increasing HIV-infections among sex workers in the red light district of Calcutta. Pardasani (2004) explains how the Sonagachi district has around 6000 sex workers and almost 400 brothels, attracting around 20,000 men every day, which created a big concern for the Indian government. Most of the sex workers in Sonagachi are victims of the patriarchal Indian society and come from the lower castes. Pardasani (2004) describes how the government wanted to increase the use of condoms among the sex workers, and a doctor, Dr. Jana, was appointed the head of the project. Dr. Jana had studied less successful condom programs and came to realize it was meaningless to just try to promote condoms among sex workers. The project had to be wider. Only trying to encourage women to engage in safe sex would not be the answer because the women relied on the money they received from selling sex. They had to take the bigger picture into the account, addressing the sex workers social, economic and structural exposure. Dr. Jana believed that only through engaging the sex workers fully in the project, the condom use would increase (Pardasani, 2004). Local and political leaders were initially very critical of the idea, as they had no belief that sex workers had the capacity of working together to create a better environment (Basu and Dutta, 2008).

Pardasani (2004) has researched the project and looked at the different interventions that were done. The goal was to empower the sex workers on different levels in order to keep HIV infections down. One of the interventions was facilitating affordable and competent healthcare centers where they also gave information about HIV and HIV prevention. The health care centers also provided services to sex workers' children, free access to condoms and literature about HIV. Another key to success was the work with the different actors, brothel owners and pimps. Without their support, change could not be possible. Peer educators were trained by health professionals. The peer educators got paid and worked as peer educators during the daytime so that it didn't affect their other work at night. The peer educators were given uniforms and nametags to promote their feeling of being professionals. The peer educators that were chosen were mostly elderly sex workers who knew the profession and also lived in the area. They were good speakers, respected by the community,

and also knew the brothel owners. The peer educators were the most important part of the project.

Another step in empowerment was to teach the sex workers other skills as well. Life skills, safety thinking, legal knowledge, human rights, parenting, negotiation skills and self-advocacy were taught. A school was built to reduce the illiteracy among sex workers. A school for sex workers' children was also built, so that they children could enjoy school without being harassed by other children. Getting a bank to cooperate with them and offer low interest loans was another substantial part. Other micro-loan projects were also created. This way, sex workers could afford saying no to unprotected sex. A store was opened where the handicraft of sex workers was sold. The money went to retired sex workers. The sex workers were empowered and encouraged to speak up in the society in order to create a debate and address their needs. Basu and Dutta (2008) explains that interventions had a very positive outcome among the sex workers. The condom use rose, creating self-esteem, and self-respect made the sex workers more motivated to use condoms, feeling their lives were worth something.

The project created the sense of an empowered community that now worked together (Pardasani, 2004). Working close together created a group empowerment (Basu and Dutta, 2008). The sex workers worked together to challenge police harassment and refuse clients who did not want to use condoms. They also fought together against brothel owners who used minor sex workers and trafficking victims (Pardasani, 2004). The community-feeling also worked as a de-stigmatizing agent, creating a cohesion and solidarity among the sex workers (Basu and Dutta, 2008). Newman (2003) describes how the work is done on an individual, group and structural level in order to create change. The sex workers are seen as their own agents, with the ability to change and control their lives. Letting the sex workers be a part of the movement is one of the keys: the sex workers defined the problems and came up with the solutions, themselves.

Basu and Dutta (2008) looked at the evaluations of why Sonagachi has been so much more successful than other HIV-prevention programs among sex workers. The answer is that the sex workers, themselves, were owners of the program. By engaging the sex workers, themselves, social change was achieved within their community. The model is now used in other parts of India and has inspired HIV-programs in other countries.

CHAPTER FOUR: SOCIAL WORK THEORIES AND APPROACHES

During our research in Uganda and while we were formulating our research questions, the sex workers interventions and their way of taking control over their lives was one of the things we found most impressive. The job the sex workers do to help each other and challenge the view of sex work is in many ways radical. In order for us to look into how their jobs can be defined as social work we decided to use social work theories. Using social work theories gives us a better understanding of how and what kind of social work the sex work activists are doing.

In many ways, the sex work activists are using radical and critical social work, aiming to get their voices heard. Radical and critical social work has inspired not only movements but it has also shaped other theories and approaches. We will look closer into some of them.

4.1 Radical and critical social work

Challenging norms in the society, questioning how the rest of the society looks at them is some important parts of the sex work movement in Kampala. The sex work activists are tired of being victimized, they want a social change and they want to challenge the way the public looks at them. That is why we found it relevant to look further into these kind of theories.

Radical social work had its breakthrough in the 1960s and 1970s. Social problems came to be seen not only as an individual problem but as a structural problem. Social change movements were born and radical social workers were claiming that the social problems such as poverty was a concern to the public (Healy, 2005).

Radical social work questioned the concept of traditional social work, the way the social workers looked at clients and the different interventions (Lavalette, 2011). One of the main-points of radical social work is the focus on structural level with the aim of social change, awareness of social systems and how the system and the society can be a part of the oppression (Payne, 2002) mainly using a class-analyze (Lavalette, 2011). Radical social workers argue that all social workers should be aware that the clients problems has its origin in the social structures and as a social worker one should always reflect on their part of a controlling and sometimes oppressing system (Lavalette, 2011). Radical social work is criticized for focusing too much on the class-structures and ignoring other oppressing parts of the society, such as gender and ethnicity. Critical social work can be seen as an extension and complement of radical social work, where they add on other injustices in the society with a critical approach (Healy, 2005).

Mullaly (1997) highlights that structural social work is necessary, he claims that the goal with social work should be independence, freedom and empowerment, and that the parts in social work that lead to oppression should be acknowledged and limited (Payne, 2002). The clients should gain awareness about the structures in the society and also, instead of seeing the clients as objects but as entity. This will give them more power to change their own situation. Mullaly (1997) also argues that social workers should be aware of the oppression that is in the social work system and that the structural system and practice of social work can lead to oppression for groups (Ibid.). Fook (2002) complements Mullalys ideas and explains how critical social work can be used both on a structural level and on a personal level. Fook (2002) claims that social work should be a combination of the client's problems and the structures they are in, and as a social worker, one should be aware of the control mechanisms that are in

those structures (Ibid.). One of social workers roles is to understand how stigma works and to help the client to understand how it affects in different areas of life. We have norms in the society that create otherness and if the client can see this it will help the client to see how the society is affecting them on an individual level. This can help the client to realize how their individual problems are in fact not only personal, instead that the client is a part of a system that affects him (Mullaly, 1997). The society often plays a part in the individual social problems and that is why the changes have to be done on different levels, both personal as structural. With this approach, it takes away the blame from a client or a group, and instead of victimizing the client, it focuses on creating awareness and to see the different parts of the problem (Payne, 2002).

The focus of radical and critical social work is changes, both individual and structural, through awareness among social workers and its clients. It is also about changing the relation between the individual and the society. The oppression that is in the structures should not be accepted but worked against to create a more supporting and including society. Critical social work theories include feminist theories, anti-oppressive practice, advocacy, Marxist theories and anti-racist theories (Payne, 2002). We will here explain the once we find useful in our research.

4.2 Anti-oppressive theory and practice

Anti-oppressive practice is one of radical social work theories that has its origin in the empowerment-movement (Payne, 2002) and can also be seen as critical social work (Healy, 2005). Anti-oppressive theory emphasize the need of a structural analyze in order to find the source of the client's problem and is also aiming for social change. However, the anti-oppressive practice also focuses on individual and cultural aspects that can be oppressive and combine it with the structural oppressive factors (Ibid.). Anti-oppressive practice comes from the idea that there is always someone who gets oppressed and there is always someone oppressing, but someone can be both oppressed and the oppressor at the same time. Dominelli (2002) claims one needs to focus less on the interaction between these groups and more on where the oppression comes from, the reproduction of it and how it works (Ibid.). One of the issues anti-oppressive theory highlights is the need of social workers to recognize different oppressions, and see how they affect the client lives. There are different forms of discrimination and oppression that interact with each other and the only way to decrease it is by identifying it and working against it (Healy, 2005). In order to work anti-oppressive, there is a need of sharing the values and constantly think critically about oppression in different forms (Payne, 2002). There are some characteristic parts of working anti-oppressive; one has to be aware of its own part and role in an oppressive system. One has to be aware of the different oppressions and obstacles, such as structural, personal and cultural to be able to help the client to get empowered (Healy, 2005). A social worker that does not understand oppression and how it works may be a part of the oppression (Dominelli, 2002). The client needs to be fully involved in the work and see it more as partnership in order to empower the client. The interventions should not be too extensive in order to minimize the oppressiveness and increase the client's ability to be an active part. Doing outreach work to empower people in the community is an example (Healy, 2005).

The theory also has a strong connection to empowerment-theories, working anti-oppressive should have a strong focus on empowerment and be client-centered (Dominelli, 2002) and have a belief in increase the client's participation in their own life and in the society. It is not only about looking at the structural oppressions, but to make the client aware of their

strengths and resources and to find the limitations in the client's life. Creating the awareness among the clients will help them to create control over its own life (Payne, 2002). However, the focus should not only be on working anti-oppressive towards clients, the work within the structure also has to be anti-oppressive, concerning the employer and employees (Dominelli, 2002).

4.3 Empowerment and advocacy

Being a part of an oppressed group means that the choices in life are limited and that the awareness about the control, oppression and discrimination has is not there. Empowerment can be seen both as a goal and as a process and is an important part in critical and radical social work. The essence of empowerment is to increase the client's control over its environment and life and to increase self-determination; it is more a way to work than a theory (Mullaly, 1997). It is about giving back the power to the client, so the client can get more control and be more involved in its life (Payne, 2002). According to empowerment, this can be done by working against the client's feeling of powerlessness and alienation. Since empowerment today is practiced by many groups in the society, it can also be seen as a social movement (Mullaly, 1997) and is an important theory when it comes to social progress (Payne, 2002). It also has a connection to human rights, seeing the oppression as degrading and limiting the clients from self-determination. Empowerment can, and should work on different levels of the society in order to create a change. It's important to work with the clients on a grass-root level to create goals and gain control over their lives and on a structural level by advocating marginalized groups' rights. To work with empowerment in a marginalized group, Mullaly (1997, p.169) means one must combine and see the importance of both individual support and structural social work in order to create empowerment. The client need to understand the connection between their individual problems and the structural oppression it is a part of (Ibid.). By understanding the structural discrimination, and become more aware of it, the client can take away some of the blame from herself and see it as something unavoidable (Payne, 2002).

Mullaly (1997, p.168) claims that a social worker cannot empower a client, it can only give the client the tools and support, the process of empowerment has to be done by the client itself. Instead of just advocating for a group's right, the social worker should empower the group and give them the help to speak up for their rights themselves. The social worker should be more of a supporter and facilitator. Similar to anti-oppressive practice, the relationship between the social worker and client is crucial. Working with empowerment, the social worker should not see himself as an expert, but create a mutual learning relationship (Ibid.).

The fact that power can be both liberating and oppressing needs to be recognized. Working with empowerment, the social worker should give the client the right knowledge and skills to be able to reclaim the power and in the long run on a structural level, this is what will create social change (Payne, 2002). But, Cornish (2006) stresses that the fact that power is a wide subject, and that one can be empowered in one field and still lack power in another field needs to be recognized. Cornish (2006) also mean that the concept of empowerment is vague and level of empowerment can be difficult to measure; it can be difficult to grasp what kind of power is needed and how to gain it. Cornish (2006) further state that empowerment is a popular tool and word to use, but that there has to be a clear understanding of different levels of power and an understanding of their co-existence. As an example; sex workers can be empowered in their communities, they can be empowered with knowledge and money, but at

the same time, sex workers can still be excluded from the labor-market or lack power in their families (Ibid.).

4.4 Feminist perspective to sex work

Feminist theories spring from the inequalities between men and women, which leads to an oppression of women (Payne, 2014). Feminism is a theory that comes from the ideology that women are equal to men, that they must have the same political, economic and social rights in the society. The movement strives for those rights. The different feminist groups have different goals (Encyclopedia of Activism and Social Justice). Feminism has changed over the decades; the first wave of feminism in the 1930's had its focus on political and legal rights, and the second wave, in the 1960's and onward, about political influence, possibilities to work and personal equalities.

Women in poor countries are often the care takers and have the main responsibility for child care (Payne, 2014). This makes them vulnerable to poverty. This is often the case in the African context, where women are the main care takers and men the breadwinners. Twikirize (In Spitzer, Twikirize, Wairire, 2014) claims that creating a more equal society demands more than just income equality. Examples show that many women in west-Saharan countries who are active in the labor market still don't have control over their own income. Twikirize (in Spitzer et. al., 2014) stresses that equality between women and men cannot be done only through the womens participation in the labor market, but there is also a need for empowerment programs for women (Ibid.). Traditional social work has before lacked a feminist perspective. There is a need for a more holistic picture and to involve the men in the family care and family issues (Payne, 2014). Cornish (2006) emphasizes that the key task when working with a feminist approach should be to both recognize women's power and at the same time recognize their oppression (Cornish, 2006, p.304).

The debate around sex work is often dominated by feminist viewpoints, paradoxically within the feminists themselves. According to O'Neill (2001), there are two major perspectives in the feminist discussion. One view is looking at women who work in sex industry as exploited and victims of gender based oppression, that "reinforce prostitution is a patriarchal institution that affects all women and gendered relations" (O'Neill, 2001, p.16). On the other side of the feminist field there is an opposite argument, stating that many women freely choose sex work as a way of income and is a profession that needs to be free from exploitation and violence as any other work. Feminist sex workers have tried to shift the moralistic approach in the discussion about sex work towards prostitution as work. This has a decreasing effect on the social stigma (O'Neill, 2001).

Many feminists also acknowledge that the society is one reason behind sex work because there are fewer choices for females in the labor market (O'Neill, 2001, p.17). In Uganda many of the sex work activists introduced themselves as feminists, and some were disappointed by the way the common feminist movement is labeling them as victims for gender based oppression and violence because of their profession. Nagle (1997) writes about the importance for feminists to listen to sex work activists who work to improve the conditions of prostitution. Nagle (1997) is also critical towards feminists who do not include sex workers views in the discussion about sex work. We will discuss more about feminism and sex work in the context of Uganda in our analysis chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE: METHODS

The methods chapter explains the procedures behind the study. We will present how the study was conducted and why we have chosen the methods that are used in this study. We decided to use both interviews and ethnographic field notes as data. In order to present the sex work activist community in Kampala as thoroughly as possible we will explain the environment and actions of activism in a descriptive way. The interviews will bring the core element to the thesis, the voices of the sex workers themselves.

5.1 Qualitative research method

When the focus of the study is to understand the world of sex work activism in Kampala, it was a natural choice to do a qualitative research. We are interested in the views and experiences of our participants that cannot be measured in quantitative ways. Descriptions in our ethnological notes and the answers in our in-depth interviews are collected in the interest of better understanding the sex work activist field. According to Bryman (2012, p.380) the focus in qualitative research is “on the understanding of the social world through an examination of the interpretation of that world by its participants”. This suited our purpose of the study. Through the qualitative interviews and ethnographic observations we intend to answer our main research questions in a way that gives the reader a picture of sex work activism in Kampala.

5.2 Micro-Ethnographic research

In the beginning of the study we were unsure how the semi-structured interviews could describe the sex work scene the best way. We realized that by adding ethnography to the study we could describe the sex work activist community and how and where it operates in an effective way. Our main aim in Uganda was to learn as much as possible how the sex work activists work. Getting to know the field by participating the different outreaches, meetings, trainings and peer support actions were crucial for us as researchers to comprehend the surroundings of sex work in Kampala. Our ethnographic field notes build up as data to the mapping section of our thesis. As we are working on a Masters level and time spend doing purely ethnographic research was limited we decided to call it micro-ethnographic study in our case, like advised in Bryman (2012). Wolcott (1990) explains that micro-ethnography differs from ethnography through focusing on particular settings under a shorter time. It doesn't aim to portray the whole cultural system because it acknowledges the limits of time and scope. “The prefix *micro* recognizes necessary accommodation to such limits, through narrowed focus and manageable objectives.” (Wolcott, 1990. p.64).

Preparing to do ethnographic study, we first familiarized with the literature about the research method. Bryman (2012, p.432) explains that ethnography is about being immersed in a social setting, regular observations of the setting and people's behavior, including listening and engaging in conversations in order to develop an understanding “of the culture of the group and people's behavior within the context of that culture and writes up a detailed account of that setting”. We later discussed our roles after a few field sessions and recognized us in the role of “Participating Observer”, like described in Bryman (2012). We were participating fully in the activities but not as full members, but as regulars and in the roles of researchers.

The planning stage of our ethnographic field studies had high importance to us since we felt that in Uganda, where sex work is illegal and activism tightly combined to the LGBTI movement we should be extra careful on how we proceed with the study on the field. We prepared our self in several ways, we always knew where we would be going and knew how to get away. We only carried a limited amount of money with us, some of it was hidden in our bras to be able to have enough money for the taxi if getting robbed. We had mobile phones with full charge of battery, speed dialed with our friends phone numbers that we also had written down in paper in case of emergency. We were aware of the hospitals that worked together with our insurance company and where to get legal aid if needed. We carried a certificate that states that we are students of Gothenburg's University to be able to prove it if any trouble with the police.

Our dress code was simple; not too serious but not too revealing. Borrowing elements of professional outreach work we had a discussion before and after the field sessions, going through the safety aspects and afterwards talking about the feelings and observations that the session had evoked in us. Intuition is very crucial when being on the field. We agreed that we would leave the field study session if either one of us felt so, no questions asked. Luckily we were safe the whole time, and we could observe and do our study without disturbances. What was also helpful and worth mentioning was that the sex work leaders gave us their word on making sure we were protected whenever we were with them, and that we had full access to the field. That gave us also a feeling that we were welcome and taken care of while collecting data in Kampala.

We wrote some notes in the field and after the field sessions we went home directly to write everything down. We both made notes because we wanted to utilize the strength of having two people with different views and focuses to form as comprehensive ethnographic observations as possible.

5.3 Interview procedures

In this study we decided to use semi-structured interviews that allowed us to have structure and order in the questions, as well as it allowed us to have room to improvise. A well formulated interview guide was a tool to have a logical order with questions in the interview situation. The interview guides consist of open-ended questions. We wanted to give as much freedom to the respondents to formulate their answers. The interviews were broad and that is why we limited the number of respondents to five to each interview section. In the paralegal interviews one respondent was interviewed two times since we wanted to get more in depth with some of the answers the respondent had given us earlier. In the peer support interviews one is done with two people, because they wished to give answers together and they had very similar backgrounds. We really wanted them to participate and that is why we agreed with the arrangement.

We had in mind from the start to make two separate sections and we used the same interview guide as a base that we had formulated together. In the end the interview guides were modified to fit the section in question in order to get the best focus to both interview topics. We brainstormed the questions individually, then took away the overlapping questions and drafted the order of the questions into different themes that later worked partly as pre-coding. We tested the interview guide with a sex work activist who gave us feedback about the questions, and then we revised the guide to its final form.

The procedure of planning the interview situations was quite natural and easy. We had already been in Uganda for many weeks and we started the interviews in the last weeks of our data collection trip. It was helpful that we already had met our respondents before so that we knew that we would have a good mixture of people from different backgrounds and organizations. The respondents were people that we had witnessed to be active with sex work activism or had worked for a long period together with the activists. We recruited them among the people we had met on the field and we had seen that their work as activists. We wanted to have a wide representation of different backgrounds of the respondents, adding activists with and without children and with and without HIV status. The respondents are of different genders and sexual orientations. We wanted to get voices from different sex work groups so that the results could mirror the sex work community in Kampala as broadly as possible.

The respondents could choose the place of the interview in order to feel relaxed and safe. Places varied a bit, some interviews were done in our home in Kampala, meeting rooms in friendly facilities, respondents homes, one in a brothel room and some wanted to be interviewed at their own offices. We taped the interviews after getting approval to do so from the respondents. All interviews were done in English. See appendix for introduction of the respondents.

5.4 Method of analyzing

Kvale (1997) argues, there is no definite right way to analyze a qualitative interview. The researcher does the analysis in the end from the thematic questions that are asked and tries to get a grasp of the meanings behind the respondent's answers, describing and interpreting the data (Ibid.). We were inspired by Kvale's (1997) Six Steps to Analysis but made an own version of it.

The process of analyzing the context of the interviews was done in steps. Firstly we had the data that was the interview transcripts. Transcriptions were made by both of us and were a long process due to hours of interview material. We read our own texts to get familiar with our results. After that we first went through our own interview data again, now writing comments and thoughts between the answers that explained the activist field or the work they do. The comments that we made were spontaneous reactions to the data and which would be helpful to answer our research questions. Then we switched the material between each other and commented on each other's interview data. In this way we both had a deep understanding of the data we had, and we used the full benefit of having two people writing the thesis. After reading each other's texts we started to look for codes that arise from the data. We formulated the codes together and applied them to our material. Like stated earlier, we had already in the interview guide divided the areas of our focus into themes, that worked with minor changes as codes that helped us analyze the text further. After reading the data several times, we color coded the text with the codes that we had found. After the data was color coded under "Social work", "Results/Outcomes", "Social Change", "Challenges with peer-support" and "Motivation to activism".

We continued by editing each section to its own document in order to comprehend the content more clearly. We picked the most relevant quotes that answered our main research questions and interpreted the meanings behind the answers. In the mini-ethnographic part our analysis was on the field notes and the aim was to grasp an understand of how the actors and the scene operates and looks like in Kampala. We chose the bits of the field notes that best describes the

sex work activist field so that the reader would get a better understanding of the circumstances in Kampala.

5.5 Validity and reliability

Validity and reliability and generalizations are important elements in assessing a qualitative study and they are also seen as the components to external validity. It refers to the question if the study can be replicated with similar findings. This is rather difficult in qualitative studies, especially in ethnographic research, since in order to measure comparability it would require similar settings and similar social role of the researcher to replicate a study (Bryman, 2012). What comes to this specific study we feel that our study design, the process and the methods used, is transparent and easily comprehensible.

One strength of our study validity and reliability wise is that we have been two people with different views and professional backgrounds. Internal Reliability is measured with the criteria how well the different members of research team agree about their observations. In this study we agree on the findings of the study that is a reliability test as such since we do share different views on sex work. We believe that this is one sign that the end result, the thesis is reliable and valid.

With a relatively small sample of sex work activists the focus of the thesis is not to produce data that could be generalized, but more to understand the phenomena of sex work activism in Kampala. External validity is difficult in this case. What comes to reliability of the study, we aim to give as transparent description of the methods and procedures used in conducting the thesis.

We tried to avoid leading questions in our interviews and also paid attention to how we verbally and body language wise reacted in the interview situations like Kvale (1997, p.146) instructs. That in combination with open ended questions and follow up questions minimizes leading the respondent with their answers and ensures that we have fully understood the respondent in the interview.

In order to test and ensure the quality of our thesis we used Spencer, Ritchie, Lewis and Dillons (2003) checklist with the criteria of quality in qualitative research. This is a list of appraisal questions that are linked to quality indicators. These are in different categories such as 'Findings', 'Design', 'Analysis' to mention a few. In the end of our writing process we went through these questions and assessed our own work through reflecting to the checklist. This was in order to ensure that this thesis has a decent standard of quality that a qualitative research should have.

5.6 Ethical considerations

Vetenskapsrådet (The Swedish Research Council, free translation) has defined four main ethical principles for research in Sweden. These requirements are 'information', 'consent', 'confidentiality' and 'usage' In this chapter we will explain how we have taken these four requirements under consideration while conducting this thesis.

Working closely with sex workers and LGBTI people made us pay extra attention to ethics. Since sex work is illegal in Uganda, our highest priority was to protect our participants privacy and anonymity. We always introduced ourselves as students from Gothenburg's

University and informed that we are doing a research about sex work activism in Kampala. In meetings we introduced ourselves and summarized our aim of the study. In the interview situations the respondents were already informed earlier what the study was about, where and how the material was going to be used, that they had the right to stop the interview at any time and that their identities would be protected through alias names. The names of the respondents in the interviews are all changed. We didn't use parts of the interviews that might compromise the respondents' anonymity. The names of the organizations and people who are mentioned in the Mapping section are real, except the ones under "The sex work activism scene" title and "Hard to reach sex workers" parts. To avoid any confusion the names that are changed in the mapping chapter will be clarified once more in the text. The material was kept safe in a confidential way. Under the requirement 'information' could be added that participation to the research was voluntary and that was emphasized to the participants. Consent was verbal, and in the interviews it was taped.

In the field situations we had the same procedure of introduction, but in a shorter version if we met very many people or if the sex workers were busy at the time. In Bryman (2012) 'harm to participants' is one of the key principles in research ethics. While in the field we were careful that we wouldn't do economic harm to the sex workers and that we wouldn't interfere or disturb in situations where the sex workers were trying to get clients. We were also discreet, trying to be as low profile as possible. This however was rather challenging since we were usually the only white people around that caused sometimes suspicious stares. Since we were under the sex work leaders' protection and care, many sex workers were already aware who we were even before meeting us. The word had spread quickly in the sex work community. It was a pleasure to see how our presence was welcomed and sex workers came up to us to chat and tell their stories and visions spontaneously. That gave us confirmation that we were ethically on the right path.

The respondents or other participants didn't gain financially from participating to the study, and we informed about it from the start so that there wouldn't be misunderstandings later. This can be thought to be under the requirement 'usage'. For respondents we paid for the transportation and soft drinks in the interview situations. In the bars and clubs we didn't buy anything to those who asked, but replied that we have to stay neutral because of the research ethics. We sometime offered a cigarette in the club situations if someone asked and was talking with us. For our gatekeepers, two activists that helped us through the whole time we were gathering data we provided dinner in a restaurant as a thank you for the work that they had done for us.

Power relations is one aspect that we were actively reflecting throughout the study. Coming from Sweden and Finland we felt quite privileged at times. We also acknowledged our personal views on sex work and tried to stay neutral as researchers. This in fact raised a lot of ethical discussions between us writers since we have two fairly different viewpoints to sex work as a profession in general.

We got a scholarship from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), and we took part in a Minor Field Studies camp before we travelled to Uganda, in order to be ethically and practically ready for the study.

5.7 Limitations of the research

Aiming to explain and describe the sex work activist field is quite a challenge, considering that the sex work activists in Kampala, nor Uganda, have never been a focus of the study before in this way. We recognize that the ethnographic study has its limitations time wise. But then again, it was not solely the emphasis on the thesis either, which is why we don't consider it as a shortage, but rather as a possibility to further research. We also considered how to focus on the actors and the scene in the ethnographic "Mapping" part. One alternative that we discussed was to focus on less actors and services in order to get a more in depth picture of those targeted fields. The limitation in our study is that we have several actors and scenes we wanted to introduce to the readers since together they form a relatively broad picture of the field. That was a deliberate choice that we made when designing our research. We wanted to document and describe the fields' unique factors even that would mean that the ethnographic part would be left slightly shallow because of the scattered focus. It was more suitable for answering our research questions.

The amount of respondents was good for a master thesis since the interviews were in-depth and broad. That was something we discussed before, should the number of respondents be bigger to be able to generalize a bit better? We came to the conclusion that the quality of the interviews was to be prioritized in our thesis, since when conducting a qualitative study that is descriptive as ours, more respondents could have risked the in-depth thought behind the interviews because of timing issues when interviewing and transcribing hour long interviews. The tone of this thesis can be interpreted as too positive. Even if we see the movement as something positive we haven't observed the sex work activists long enough to see the shortcomings and conflicts of the activist movement. In this sense we are aware that a researcher must stay critical in the process when people are eager to show the good sides of their actions. In defense of the positive tone and slight pro-sex work attitude we genuinely didn't witness great conflicts or low quality peer support interventions the time we spend in the Kampala sex work community.

One limitation that we would have been interested to look more closely at was the official's views on sex work activists. This was however outside our main research questions but it would have helped us to gain more understanding and help to broaden our perspective. Also it would have been interesting to know more about grass-root level social work ideology in Uganda.

Having previous experiences and our own connections over many years in Uganda and East-Africa in general, we consider ourselves as having cultural know-how of Uganda. This still doesn't mean that we could overlook the fact of coming from the Nordic countries and carry our own views, beliefs and values as well as skin color. This might have been a hindrance of some sort, even we didn't notice anything remarkable. All communication during the data collection was carried out in English. Speaking Luganda, the main language in the Kampala region would have probably given us a different kind of experience on the field. What the end product, this thesis, would be like coming from a native Ugandan student is purely speculation.

5.8 Division of the research and the results

Since we used different techniques collecting our data, we have divided our results into three parts. The first part is a mapping-chapter, where we explain important actors in the sex work

movement. This part is partly ethnographic. For us to get a deeper understanding of the sex work activism field in Kampala, we spent a lot of time with sex work activists in their different activities. This way, we got a better picture of who the actors were and what kind of service they provided. During this time, we decided to both do one in depth part each, focusing on different services and activities, and in this way we got a deeper understanding of exactly what it means to be a sex work activist. During our mapping-period, there were certain activities that caught our interest more and that we wanted to get a better picture of. The themes are paralegal training and peer support. Both are two key-elements in the work the sex work activists do, and it also gave us a better understanding of the work they do and the challenges they face.

We have been two students who have written this thesis together. We have divided the different thesis parts between each other and some parts we have written together. In the result chapter, we decided to make one in depth part each, paralegal training and peer-support. We have decided to divide the other parts between us, but all the texts have been passed between us several times in order to both get to know the texts and add complementary information.

5.9 How we got access to the sex work field

After we had contacted the umbrella organization of sex worker led organizations in Uganda, Uganda Harmonized Rights Alliance, we got a chance to have a meeting with two sex work activists that later became our gatekeepers in this study. This meeting was crucial to our study. We presented our study design and ourselves to the activists and tried to shed light on why we are interested in the sex work field in Kampala. We discussed our thoughts and views about sex work in general and explained the benefits that we hoped to gain with the research, to recognize the work of sex work activists and document the scene and activities that they do through peer support and advocacy. In the end of the meeting we were granted full access to the sex work activist field and their protection and guidance to the research. We believe that our former experience with sex work related issues helped us out in getting access to the field and that we had a clear vision of what we wanted to gain with the study. Many times when issues about sex work are discussed in the media or sometimes even research, the focus can be more on underlining the victim aspect of sex workers. We want to strongly avoid the “social porn” viewpoint, to describe the field in a scandalous way or deliberately trying to shock the reader. Our aim has been to write this thesis in a demystifying way, in order not to strengthen the stigma of sex work. We also planned (and implemented) that sex workers are consulted and heard throughout the thesis process. “Nothing about us Without us”. This aspect, we believe, is one of the key reasons why we got access to the field and why people were willing to participate in this study.

CHAPTER SIX: MAPPING OF THE SEX WORK ACTIVIST SCENE

In order to understand the surroundings where sex work activists work in we decided to look into many different actors in order to create what we call a map, which will explain the sex work scene in Kampala. Since there is no prior study made of the current sex work scene in Kampala, we decided to map out what we discovered during our data collection. The method used in this chapter is mini-ethnographic research. The information is based on our field notes from the visits to several organizations, outreaches and facilities for sex workers.

Firstly we will explain the actors in the sex work field in Kampala, including the sex worker led NGO's and their most important cooperation partners that are specialized in sex workers rights¹. The first field notes are about WONETHA, MARPI and HRAPF, they are examples of organizations that work with sex workers. The names in these notes are real. To understand how these key-organizations work, the chapter includes both ethnographic notes and informative texts. Secondly, we will present the field notes about a sex bar, gay bar and a slum hotspot that are solely ethnographic. The last part, with notes from the meeting with a male-to-female sex worker are half ethnographic and with half analytic comments about the meeting. The names in these notes are changed.

6.1 Actors in the field of sex work activism in Kampala

The actors in the field of sex work can be roughly divided into three categories, the sex worker led organizations, the umbrella organizations and the key allies of the sex work organizations. In this mapping we are focusing on actors who are specialized in sex workers and/or provide friendly services to sex workers in Kampala. The data is collected during spring 2015, which is good to acknowledge since the field is constantly changing. The main aim of mapping the actors in the field of sex work in Kampala is to provide a picture of who are the key actors in the field and how they are organized among each other.

The umbrella organization and sex worker led organizations

Our pre-information about the sex work activists was that there were several sex worker led organizations that carry out peer support and advocacy in Kampala. These organizations were listed in the web pages of the Global Network of Sex Work Projects (nswp.org). This was the starting point of our mapping, collecting the information of the actors from the sex worker led organizations. Our first contact was to The Uganda Harmonized Rights Alliance (UHRA) that is an umbrella organization for the other sex worker led organizations in Uganda. The alliance is coordinated by sex workers and provides information and capacity building for member organizations, acts as a link between them, raising awareness about needs of sex workers and advocacy on policies and rights on national, regional and international level. In the next part we will introduce WONETHA as an example of a sex worker led organization.

WONETHA

WONETHA is one of the several sex worker led organizations that we visited. It is one of the biggest organizations in the field. We visited WONETHA's office two times and got a chance

¹ See appendix five for map of sex work organizations

to familiarize with their activities. Natukunda Diana is the advocacy and communication officer as well as a sex worker and she had time to introduce the organization to us.

We took a boda boda² motorcycle taxi to WONETHA's office, it was somehow far away from our home. It took time for us to spot the house that was surrounded by a brick wall. The logo led us to the right place. Entering the premises we saw that the office was actually very nice, having a small yard and a garage that was turned into a classroom. The house was well kept and in order, posters of sex work related information was hanging on the walls. There was electricity and running water, somebody was having a computer lesson in the corner of the entrance hall. Someone was wearing a T-shirt that stated the sex work slogan "Only Rights Can Stop The Wrongs".

Diana told us that WONETHA started 2008 by three sex workers. They saw the challenges in the field and together started up WONETHA. WONETHA are strongly believers in democratic values, therefore they created a constitution, stating that one can only be the director and leader for five years. After five years, the members vote for a new leader. The funders are still in WONETHA but no longer in leading positions. WONETHA has international donors and funds, financially supporting them in the different activities. The staff that consists of sex workers gets paid and also the peer supporters get a small allowance. WONETHA is working in four different districts of Uganda, Kampala is one of them. They work closely together with the sex workers in the more rural areas. The organization has more than 400 paying members, and it costs 10 000 UGX (around three Euros) to become a member.

The main room was filled with women with their books, all eyes on the teacher. It was an English lesson and the sex workers were sitting around the big table doing notes. The class greeted us cheerfully: "Welcome visitors!" We heard that learning English is very popular, since it widens the possibility of clientele. It's also good from a safer sex standpoint. In sex work, you really want to explain what services you offer and what is not included in the service.

WONETHA has four program areas where they work with empowering sex workers; First area is the health and outreach area. They distribute condoms, teach about safer sex and also do HIV-testing on the field. In this department they also have the peer support area. They have 26 peer supporters, located on the 26 hotspots of Kampala and in other districts of the country. Diana started her work at WONETHA as a peer educator 2013 and later applied for the job as advocacy manager 2014. When she started as a peer educator, they only had 6 peer educators. Since WONETHA is a member owned and controlled organization, the people at hot spots will choose who they want to have as peer educator. All the peer educators are also paralegals.

The Second area is the advocacy department. WONETHA works with different partners, both sex work organizations and state partners, such as the police. They work with awareness and trying to impact the working environments of sex workers. They also work on a structural level, trying to challenge the laws that are harmful for the profession. They just recently send in a petition against APA. They create meetings, concerning sex workers rights with different actors, like brothels, police, stakeholders, local leaders, lawyers etc. Diana explains that to work with advocacy, it is important to be seen and heard. That's why the organization is

² Local word for a motorcycle taxi

active to promote their services and being present whenever possible. WONETHA also publishes annual reports that they give to the donors, this way there is also some transparency in their work.

Diana says that they do always try to arrange meetings and outreaches on special holidays and theme days. As a gift we got WONETHA's T-shirts, which was a really nice gesture. There were a lot pictures around of the different events they have organized. Building team spirit and togetherness seems to be a big part of the activity. The atmosphere is relaxed and it seems that everybody knows each other.

The third part is economic empowerment. They encourage their members to plan for retirement. They teach saving skills. And they also help and encourage sex workers to create other businesses on the side. During their outreach, they will see what needs are out there and how to strengthen the members. One example is that they found out that many members wanted to learn how to make a will, so created the memory project. Another project they created was parenting support. Some of the members did not know how to take care of their children and are lacking a social support network, so they had support groups and education in parenting.

Fourth area is the literacy help. They have a program called Function adult literacy. This program is about fighting illiteracy, they have classes three days a week, from 10-14 o'clock. They have more than 30 students at the same time. Many of their members cannot write their own name. Computer skills is also quite popular program, everything starts to be online and at the office the sex workers get access to the computer.

The class in the garage was learning how to read. The teachers come from outside of WONETHA just for the courses. The teacher asked some of the students to introduce themselves. The class was filled with giggles and excitement. The teacher explains that many of the women are newly learned English and are a little shy to use it. We felt cheerful ourselves after the times at WONETHA. We saw classrooms filled with motivated and enthusiastic grass root sex workers that want to get new skills that can benefit them in their lives, with no fear of discrimination.

How the sex worker led organizations are formed

One of the key findings in our mapping of sex work related organizations is the way they have formed and organized themselves according to specific needs of particular sex worker groups. Mostly the focus is in sexual or gender minority groups that have formed their own organizations. As an example of such division is *Come Out Test Post Club* that is an organization for transgendered and transsexual people who are HIV positive and engage in sex work. *Youth on Rock Foundation* then again specializes on gay male sex workers. *Women Arise For Change* is an organization for bisexuals, lesbians and refugee sex workers. These are examples of how the groups have divided their focus according to gender and sexuality.

The organizations work together and plan their activities and outreaches so that they don't duplicate their work. What we witnessed it seemed that the organizations are not competing with each other since they all have their own areas of specialization and they work closely together. In the field it was easy to see how all the actors knew each other, creating a tight alliance of sex worker activists. The sex worker led organizations cooperate with other non-sex work LGBTI organizations. The sex work community also works very closely with other organizations that work with key populations. When these different oppressed or vulnerable

groups come together to fight for equal rights it creates a strong and powerful movement. Solidarity between sex workers and other key populations has created a network that can fight oppression more effectively.

6.2 Sex work friendly organizations

The activist and their organizations can be thought as a link between the grass-root sex workers and the sex work friendly services and facilities. Before arriving to Uganda, we didn't know how impressive friendly services Kampala has for the sex work community. The sex work friendly services focus on key populations in general, but have strongly targeted sex workers and offer services that are specialized to this specific group. We are using two service providers as an example of sex work friendly services; MARPI (Most At Risk Populations Initiative) and HRAPF (Human Rights Awareness and Promotion Forum). We will go more in depth with these organizations in order to explain what makes an organization sex work friendly and how organizations can create sex work friendly facilities. Our information is based to the field notes from our visits and discussions with these organizations.

Field note: Most At Risk Populations Initiative (MARPI)

Memo from Sex workers health clinic MARPI 28th of January 2015

MARPI is a clinic that has been active since 2008. It targets people who are most at risk to HIV and other STI's, shortly said groups that tend to have multiple partners, like sex workers, uniformed services (police, military etc.), truck drivers, fisher folk, and injecting drug users. The clinic works both preventive and giving health services, counseling and medication free of charge to sex workers, their children and immediate family such as steady partners.

We were not sure what to expect when we arrived at the gates of old Mulago hospital area. We had gotten the instructions how to navigate to the clinic, we should be able to find it after we locate the tuberculosis clinic. After seeing a lot of patients with mouth masks we knew we were close. The clinic itself was peaceful, there were approximately 40 women and children sitting in the shadows waiting for test results or using the free internet that the place offers to the clients. Seven women were sitting in the waiting room, some were filling forms that the newcomers need to fill in. There were no loud voices, music or such. We didn't experience the setting depressing, very neural in fact, still more optimistic than passive.

The sun was hot and we were pleased to enter the cool office of the project supervisor Ayebare Margaret Mugasho. We got good background information of MARPI. It was established 2008 by doctors in Mulago hospital who were working with in the Mulago-Makereres Joint AIDS Program (MJAP). They noticed that there were many people coming to the clinic very frequently to test themselves, sometimes part of them for treatment and return again quite soon with an STI. They identified the group as sex workers and started an initiative to start up MARPI to give special care for the group that needs it because of its stigmatized and decriminalized nature.

MARPI has at the moment 500 individual sex workers as clients, 38 children of sex workers and between 50-60 MSM. The basic services are health care services that is emphasized in HIV and STI's, including counseling and testing, condom promotion, ART care and

treatment, community outreach, social work counseling and training and capacity building for key populations such as sex workers.

Our sex work activist informants are always talking about MARPI and have high respect for the service they deliver. They say that MARPI is a lifesaver for many sex workers. The services are given with trust and respect and the threshold is low to enter the services. As we walked around with Margaret we understood what makes the place so unique. The atmosphere was remarkably relaxed, it was seen in the faces of the patients and in the body language of caregivers. It seemed like people knew each other to some extent, our gatekeeper who escorted us was chatting and instructing to the women who were waiting to see a doctor. It seems like activists are always on duty.

The sex worker activists are working closely with MARPI, referring their members to use the services and conducting trainings in the MARPI's premises. The sex work activists use the common space to keep their workshops there free of charge. Margaret said that without the activists the clinic couldn't simply work.

The staff consist of two doctors, six social workers (some unpaid), three working in the laboratory and other staff. One of the core values in MARPI is the community involvement. Social workers go out in the community in order to do outreach. They also have a free phone service for those in need who cannot come to place themselves.

The calls are also free of charge. In case of someone is too sick to enter the clinic they try to reach and treat the client in the community. That is low threshold service indeed, that the workers of MARPI can come and asses you at home. When we went home from MARPI, we were both impressed of what we had seen. Suddenly a quick blush came to my cheeks. It was the embarrassment of underestimating totally the given services to sex workers in Kampala.

Field note: Human Rights and Awareness Forum (HRAPF)

HRAPFs office 10th of February 2015

HRAPF offers legal aid service free of charge for LGTBI-persons, sex workers (the only law firm in Kampala that offers free legal service to sex workers), legal aid to HIV-positive, legal support to sex- workers concerning custody, sometimes land disputes. At the moment the firm has 10 lawyers employed. In this chapter we will share notes from our meeting with HRAPF, but also explain how HRAPF work and their experience from working with sex workers.

HRAPF has their office in a calm area surrounded by villas. The office had guards protecting the premises, which is not a strange scene in Kampala. When we reached the office we first had to sign in at a security stand and later also at the reception. It was a busy place, there were clients waiting at the reception and lawyers and other staff were walking around and chatting. The walls were filled with different diplomas and acknowledgements HRAPF had achieved. Especially pictures of HRAPF staff with Hillary Clinton, handing over a diploma for their work for human rights caught our eyes. Even though we had tried to dress up as business like as possible, we didn't feel we had the same standards as the people working there. We were sweaty because of the heat, and dirty due to the motorcycle ride.

We didn't have to wait long until a lawyer, Fridah introduced herself and led us into the executive director Adrian Jjuukos office. Mr. Jjuuko gave a very professional impression even though he didn't seem to be very old. He was well aware of the Swedish model concerning sex

work and had studied abroad for many years. Mr. Jjuuko asked what we wanted to know, and then gave us a good explanation of the sex work field and the laws that concerned sex workers;

HRAPF acknowledge sex workers are a vulnerable group in need of legal representation. Sex workers have very little security in their work environment, no, or little family-support and they are an easy target for the police. Many times when a sex worker gets arrested, the easiest way to deal with the situation is to plead guilty and pay the bail which also helps to avoid prison. HRAPF offers legal advice when arrested and during the legal process but also helps to pay the bail for the sex worker. Most of the time, they advised sex workers not to plead guilty, since they will get a record.

HRAPF works on a structural level with awareness of human rights and legal rights to the sex work community. The purpose is to empower the sex workers and educate about their constitutional rights and what to do when they get arrested. They give legal advice to sex work activist groups and help them to register as NGOs and become partners with HRAPF. They reach their target groups through sex work organizations, and the co-operation is valued from both sides. HRAPF doesn't do outreach work on their own, but work through the NGOs who does it in order to reach the sex workers. The organization gives paralegal education to the partner NGOs that they work with. The paralegals can help in the easier cases and with legal advices, but HRAPF handles the more complicated cases that require a lawyer.

Laws that affect sex workers

Many of the laws that are affecting sex workers are found in the constitution of Uganda (Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, 1995). Chapter four is about human rights, and support of all people. Chapter 40, your right to work, but does not give a definition of what work is. The constitutional is very liberal about rights but the vague definitions of terms makes the law open to different legal interpretations.

Most laws that concern sex workers are under the Penal Code Act 1950. Prostitution is as mentioned earlier, criminalized. But the law is, according to HRAPF rarely used because it is difficult to get enough evidence to convict. During four years HRAPF have had only one client charged of prostitution. Instead the law enforcement uses another way to charge the sex workers that need less evidence, the Rogue and Vagabond paragraph. The rogues and vagabond- paragraph is vague and leaves a lot of space for interpretation, which has made it the most often used law on sex workers. HRAPF explained that the police uses this paragraph to arrest sex workers in hope of bribes. The aim behind the arrests is most often not to enforce the law, but to make money.

One can also be charged with "Living on the earnings of prostitution", maximum punishment is seven years. This means anyone who gets money from prostitution can be charged, like the children or parents of sex workers and brothels. This can also be applied on NGOS working for sex workers. This law was used 2012 when they were targeting WONETHAs activities. Also other NGOs and HRAPF-partners have been closed down under this law.

APA that for example is known for the mini skirt restrictions is not often used on sex workers. Although the law is in use, it is rarely implemented. We were told by HRAPF that it's a matter of class who gets arrested or abused by the public, a woman working on the market

selling tomatoes might be targeted and abused wearing a mini-skirt, but a lawyer will not. However it still strengthens the stigma on sex workers.

The punishment for prostitution is max seven years in prison, vagabond max five years. The first time charged with vagabond one can get a few months in prison, next time a year but in the reality this does not happen often. Mostly the accused ends up with some community service. Sex workers often get arrested many times, and with a criminal record, they will be seen as a repeater offender, which means the punishment will get higher.

Human rights and HRAPF's challenges

One of the reasons HRAPF started was because they felt it was too much ignorance concerning human rights, especially among the police. Uganda has ratified the human right charters. It is however, not always implemented. But also some of the laws they have are not always implemented, in Uganda, it is a difference between law and practice. Uganda passes laws that never are used in reality. Like the homosexual -law, no one has ever been arrested and charged for homosexual acts until recently. Most of the time, the police will pick you up, arrest you and then think about what laws they will charge you with.

The biggest expense for HRAPF is to bail people out of prison. The people who get bailed out are most of the time not interested in knowing who helped them. The bail money is supposed to be handed back to HRAPF at the court-date. Each bail is about 100 000 UGX. The money will be in a check in the offender's name, and the offenders often use fake names or/and does not show up on the court date. This is something HRAPF is now working on and they hope the check can be put in their legal firm name instead. They also want to work on awareness when it comes to the people they help so they understand the commitment. Last year, HRAPF dealt with 33 cases of sex workers, these cases include 150 people. Often many people get arrested together and that will be one case.

Why don't sex workers show up to court, we wondered? We got the explanation that there are three main reasons for that. People feel entitled, not thankful. People don't care about the money or they don't have the means to get there. To get the bail money back they need to have a name, an ID-card and a bank account to prove their identification.

HRAPF on a structural level

HRAPF works closely with the police on a higher level, especially when it comes to LGBTI-people. When it comes to sex workers who have been mistreated, they will immediately go to the top of the chain of command. They also work with the police on the field and local leaders concerning awareness and human rights. They try to inform the police in the issue of sex work as mediators and they are doing progress on that field. The violence and mistreatment has decreased over the time they have worked with sex workers. They do not work with politicians, and the politicians are not disturbing them either, even though HRAPF could be charged with earnings of sex workers and when AHA was in practice they could be charged with supporting homosexuality. However, lawyers are seen as untouchable and a respected profession and politicians and the police will look for easier more vulnerable targets.

HRAPF's view on the future of sex work activism

HRAPF stresses that sex work activism needs more time and more experience. It is still a small group and they need more organization-skills. It takes a long time to change morals. When it comes to LGBTI, they also need to work on activism, advocacy, and more actors on the field. The LGBTI movement is now starting to create awareness, it may appear that the

country is going backwards when compared to the west. HRAPF sees that there has been significant improvements and explain that the reality is not as bad as the law. Since HRAPF started, only one person has been killed because of sexual orientation, which is low compared to other African countries like South Africa. Uganda has to work on equality issues, like WONETHA stated, equality lifts everyone. The sex work environment has to improve. At this moment you can buy sex for one-two dollars which makes the sex workers economic situation is very poor. Addition to this the sex workers have to pay a lot of bribes to the police. HRAPF thinks that it can take up to 30-50 years for a moral change in Uganda. People need to have food, clean water, healthcare, HIV-security and roads. The basic needs must be satisfied in order to make a greater change in the structural level.

6.3 The sex work activism scene

Sex work is pretty much everywhere in Kampala. It's hidden and it's open, it's public and it's private. In this chapter we are focusing on the scene where sex work activism takes place, in the grass root level where money or goods are exchanged for sex in places such as streets, bars and hotels. Activism also takes place in the organizations and official services, as well as in the political field. The activism scene is wide and doesn't limit to the hotspots of the city. We have chosen to look more in depth into two scenes of activism in Kampala: Bwaise, the big slum area in the city and a LGBTI club night. We chose these two areas as examples of how the scene where activism functions in grass root level in Kampala. We will also give examples of two scenes that the activist say are harder to reach, the high class bar sex workers and hetero male-to-female sex scene. Through ethnographic field notes we will describe the scene how we experienced it.

Where sexual services are sold

The sex work activists operate from the areas where sex work is done. Outreach is done by several organizations, including peer support like for example guiding to friendly services and condom distribution. The scene where sex is sold is very important because many of the vulnerable sex workers don't have the means to travel to offices in other parts of the city in order to get free condoms and other services that the activists provide. Outreach is done in hotspots in the streets, bars, lodges and brothels. It is systematic and frequent, that would equal to a professional way from a social work perspective. Many sex workers stay in the nearby areas where they live because of economic reasons, the ones who can afford to take public means or taxis are in better situation to choose where and to who they want to sell sex to. Even though sex work is illegal in Uganda, the scene is very open, especially once you learn to see what to look for. Hot spots are divided to peer educators which makes it easier to spread information onward when the activists are not there themselves. The activists educate the peer helpers and so the chain works all the way to the streets of the city. Still the sex work activists do outreaches themselves and together with the peer supporters to make sure everything is running well, and evaluating the needs of different areas. Hierarchy is something that our informants have told us that they want to avoid and that is visible. The atmosphere is very relaxed and filled with shared respect. In the next part we will give examples of places where the activists do outreaches. We were able to follow the sex work activists during the time they did outreach work to take a part of the sex work scene. We will here share field notes from two of these occasions.

Field notes: Gay club night

Memo from Gay bar 26th of January 2015

We wanted to include the Gay club night to our research because it's a place where many activists come together and they also do outreach work at the club nights. It is a normal local bar that turns into a disco once a week, welcoming the LGBTI people of Kampala. The owners are LGBTI-friendly people that has enabled the club night.

We had only met our informants once before and they invited us to come with them to the gay bar. We got very nervous as the evening came closer, knowing how the mob justice works in Uganda. We decided to take serious safety measurements before going; we brought the certificate stating we were students, money both in our wallet and in our bra, and made sure we had phone numbers written down. We decided to wear club-outfits that was not too revealing but yet not too boring.

We were picked up at a gas station by our informants and drove to the bar. During the drive, they drove us around some of the areas with many sex workers. This was in a better area and they were defined as high-class sex-workers. To be able to protect each other our informants told us they all stand on the same side of the road and keep track of each other and that they come back again.

When we arrived at the bar, we were met by a few LGBT-people. They were good friends of both of our informants and greeted us with warmth. One of them introduced himself; "Hi, I'm HIV-positive, I'm Trans, a proud sex worker and I'm out!". Later he told us how he had been kidnapped and beaten but managed to flee Uganda. When the bill came to action, he left Uganda for South Africa, but the same day the anti-gay bill was cancelled, he returned to Uganda.

The bar was very cozy; there were colorful lights and a small dance floor. A DJ was playing music, a mix of Nigerian and western music. People were friendly and curious about us. We had feared the LGBTI community would be a closed community that would look at us with suspicion. Our informants were very keen on making us feel safe. They watched over us at all time and told us not to leave without them. When we had to go to the toilet, they would follow us there. Other people also came up to us and told us to watch out for thieves, "even gays steal" as one man explained. In the end, we did not feel like the place was unsafe, the people were friendly and welcoming, and we had the feeling the informants watched out for us mostly so we would feel safe, and not so much because there was a threat towards us.

Our informants introduced us to many other activists, many of them had different NGOs or were working with gay rights or sex work related issues. Some of the LGBTI-people that we met were open with the fact that they sold sex, some did not sell sex, but they were all out together. We had decided from the beginning not to ask questions, but let people tell us if they wanted to.

As the evening got later, more and more people came to join the bar, to dance, to hang out with friends or to sell sex. When we asked our informant if it was dangerous for us to be in a gay-bar, he said no. The police had never been there, but they had to close the bar when the bill was in action. He also said the location of the bar probably was one of the reasons why

the police had not been there. It is located close to an international organization's headquarters.

Most of the guests of the gay bar were men, but there were also women and trans-people coming. The majority was Ugandan; however, there were also a lesbian mzungu³-couple, some Asian men and some western men. In the end, before we left, the place were crowded with people, approximately 70 people enjoying the night and filling the dance floor.

During the night, both of our informants took turns and did outreach work. Next week they would come there and hand out lubricants and condoms for the sex workers. When we asked our informant about his purpose of the visits, he said it is firstly to do outreach work and support the sex workers there, second to have a good time with friends. He explained he rarely sold sex during the gay nights, due to the fact that he is very known person in the field and people often tend to come and seek advice from him. That was indeed so, many people came to our informants to say hello or seek advice. That is a sign of successful outreach.

Field notes: Bwaise

Memo from Bwaise 21st of March 2015

Bwaise is the biggest slum area of Kampala. Outreach in Bwaise is an example how to deliver peer support services to the areas where most vulnerable sex workers operate. It's also an area where HIV rates among sex workers are high.

We came to Bwaise a Friday night and had to wait for our informants to pick us up. We got nervous standing there in the dark since we attracted a lot of looks from people passing by. To be on the safe side, we had money and a cellphone in our bra and not in the purse. This time, we had focused more than usual on how to dress. We didn't want to steal attention from the customers, but we also didn't want to look like schoolgirls. In the end we both chose some black discrete outfits.

When the informants finally came to pick us up, we felt much safer. They took us to a small bar owned by a sex worker; she had saved up money doing sex work to be able to buy the bar. The bar owner was also a peer supporter and had big cartons of condoms there. Sex workers in the area knew it was a sex work friendly bar and that they could go there to get condoms. We asked the bar owner if she had clients as well, and she explained that she let the neighbor bars and friends watch the bar if she would get a costumer.

There is a big road that crosses Bwaise, but otherwise it is mostly filled with small muddy trails. There are no streetlights, and we walked with flashlights. The other women were apparently much more used walking on these small trails than we were. There were potholes everywhere, and the sewers follow all the trails. To cross them, we had to walk over small bridges made out of thin unstable planks. The sex workers following us made sure we didn't fall into the sewers, but we were still afraid to take a wrong step and fall into filthy water. There was a strong odor around the area that was difficult to ignore.

We got some boxes of condoms and went with three sex workers to distribute them to brothels in the area. It was still early in the night, and there were not many sex workers out yet. As the night went by, more sex workers went out on the streets and around the brothels. We visited

³ Local word for white person

four brothels and distributed condoms. The brothel owners were willing to talk to us, most likely because we came with our informants. The brothel owners were both women and men, and the rooms would also be used as lodges at some places. In one of the brothels, girls were getting ready for the night. It was small place, with corridors filled with small rooms. No electricity. It was quiet. Just concrete walls and broken old doors. The rooms contained a mattress on a concrete floor and a bucket of water to freshen up. In most places you get a candle and a condom when you enter the room.

We gave the brothel owners the condoms and talked about the business. The rooms cost 1000 UGX (which is about 30 euro-cents) for a quickie, the sex is not included in this rate. The women usually worked from one brothel, but didn't have a commitment to the place. Some of the women worked on the streets around the brothels, some sat outside the brothels waiting for customers. The brothel owner seemed to feel some kind of responsibility and most of them had safety routines. One of the brothel managers, a young woman with small children, explained that after given a condom and a candle, she would go and knock on the door after a while to see that everything was ok. At some places, the customers had to sign in in a log book, the customers were both from Bwaise and from other areas of Uganda. The woman normally charged around 3000 UGX for a quickie, and around 10 000 UGX for unprotected sex. A good night, they would get over 10 customers. Many of the women we talked to said they preferred the short sessions. They explained that the customers who bought your service for a whole night sometimes felt they could do whatever they wanted with you.

When we had finished distributing the condoms, we went back to the bar. The streets were now filled with more people and there were music coming from different places. There were sex workers and customers on the streets, people were out to drink and enjoy a Friday night. We sat down to talk, and outside the bar on the side, three children were dancing for money. Our informant said it was the children of sex workers. The children were skilled dancers, but they didn't fit into the scene. We felt that this is not a place for children at night and asked what our informant thought about the children dancing for money on the street. She looked a bit sad and told us that she didn't like it either, and that the reason why the children are there is probably because there is no place for them to go while the mother is working. Having a night care place for the sex workers children would be a safer option if there would be funds for it.

During our time in Bwaise, the sex workers explained how the sex work scene in Bwaise has changed radically over the last five years. Bwaise is an area where the peer supporters have done a lot of outreach work. They now have cooperation with the brothels, bars and lodges in the area. They also cover the hotspots. The accessibility of condoms has increased drastically, all the brothels they worked with have condoms to give away for free.

Another improvement they explained was the relationship with the police. The police used to harass and rape the sex workers but it happens rarely in the area where the peer support is strong. The sex workers feel more empowered and know their rights. This is mostly due to the paralegal system and as well as the activist and peer support network. The attitude change has increased the solidarity within the areas, even though there is still personal disagreements and competition in the field.

Public services and the political arenas

During the time in Uganda we spend following the activists and their activities it was clear that a lot of the sex work activism is done in structures. The activists have active networks,

meetings, capacity building and advocacy work in different levels. To make a greater impact the political work is important to the activist in Kampala. Lobbying for human rights, making the sex workers voices heard in different forums and raising awareness to end stigma and discrimination against sex workers takes up a significant amount of time of the activism. However in order to make reforms in the society this is essential part of the scenes that they have to operate. Cooperating with the officials within the police and health care is crucial to increase the safety and fair and equal treatment among sex workers. That makes prisons, hospitals and police departments also arenas for sex work activism.

6.4 The hard to reach sex workers

Our informants talked about the importance of including all sex workers in the sex work community, even though it is hard with some groups of people who sell sex. Receiving peer support is voluntary but it's important to let sex workers know their rights and information about friendly services in case they might need it in some point of their lives. The so called more empowered sex workers and the ones who exchange money or other goods for sexual services but don't necessarily identify themselves as sex workers are according to our research harder to approach and reach. This is important to point out since the motto of the activists is that no one should be left behind.

Field notes: Sex bar

Memo sex bar 7th of February 2015

We were interested to learn about the challenges of peer support and did several observations in a downtown bar in Kampala that is commonly known for sex work. As an example of sex workers that are hard to reach are the downtown club women. This is not that they would be difficult to find, but rather because they don't often share the same need for low threshold services because of better economy. Reason to make ethnographic notes about the sex bar scene in Kampala is because we want to describe the many scenes of sex work in the city. This is also mentioned as a challenge of peer support in our interviews, to reach and build trust to the club sex workers in downtown Kampala.

This was the second time we went to the sex bar to see how the sex work field looks like. We first went there the first week of our stay and get a big picture of the place. The second time we wanted to focus more on the women there and the scene. The bar is one of the most known bars for female sex workers. This was a Friday night, one of the busiest nights. When we entered the bar the waiters looked a little surprised of what we were doing there, but still in a friendly manner. The first night we had been welcomed by a sex worker in her early twenties who after a short time told us she could help us get customers. We were surprised they assumed we were sex workers, and not just two women getting lost in the Kampala night life. We were dressed like we were going clubbing, but compared to many of the women there, we still looked conservatively dressed.

The bar is located in central Kampala, close to many high class hotels and business streets. It has a big garden with some lights in the trees and a dance floor. The bar can be entered from the street, and to our surprise, also from the side of one of the best hotels in Kampala. According to the women working there, it is the same owner to both the bar and the expensive hotel. Passing the hotel, we met one of the women we met last time we were there. She sat in the hotel restaurants by herself with a drink, waiting for a client. She seemed happy to see us and we exchanged some words.

The men who came to the bar were both black men, a few western and some of Asian origin. The women working at the bar either sat at the bar or walked around in very high heels. We sat down at a table; it didn't take long until a woman came and sat down with us and asked for a cigarette. Soon some women we met last time came up to us and they were curious to see us. They told us that tonight they are walking rounds so they couldn't stay with us. One of the women told us she lost her friend, but that maybe she had met a guy and went for a quickie. We realized they didn't have a problem talking to us, even though we didn't know each other well yet.

Neither of the women asked about our purpose at the bar, but we had from the beginning decided to be honest so we explained that we were doing a study and explained shortly the purpose of it. They were not suspicious before, and they didn't seem to care about the fact that we were student's either. They asked if we could get some drinks for them. We explained that we couldn't buy beer for them for ethical reasons and they seemed to understand that as well.

At one point, a waitress came up to the woman one of us were sitting with and told her that there was a guy who was interested in one of us. When we asked the woman if she knew the guy, she said no. But she told us they cooperate with the waitresses. The men at the bar will tell the waitress who they are interested in, and the waitress would pass the message on. The waiters came often to the women that we were talking with. It was clear that they had a good relationship with the waitresses and the women explained that they were almost like friends. It was obvious that the sex workers were one key factor of the bar and that they working there was not a problem to the business, maybe even the other way around.

Neither of the women would use words like prostitution or selling sex. They would say they went there to look for money or to find guys. When we asked if all women there was looking for money, they said yes. All the women were speaking fluent English that enabled us to communicate without someone translating.

We understood that there are apartments near the bar that the women could use for business. We asked one woman, J, if she had heard about the sex work activists and the services for sex workers. We gave an example of the MARPIs clinic. She hadn't heard about it and was surprised and interested. As we left the place, we wondered how the sex workers there did not have the information about the sex worker led organizations, especially since it was a place with so many sex workers. Then again with limited resources it was understandable that these sex workers were not in the front line when designing services, because the need is greater in the slums and streets. Including this group of sex workers is still important, like the activists have underlined. Advocacy about rights and legislation and adequate information about safer sex work is useful for everybody in the field of sex work. It's another question if the sex worker doesn't want the support. That is everybody's own choice to make, we thought, as we jumped on boda boda's to continue our evening in the night of Kampala.

Field notes: Men who sell sex to women

Memo from meeting a straight male sex worker 19th of February 2015

Another example of hard to reach sex workers is an interview we conducted with a heterosexual male who sells sex to women through a pimp. He is part of a group of men who

work under the pimp and he or his colleagues are not in the sex work community, but they form their own inside group where they support each other. The reason for taking this with in our research is to show the challenges of outreach and an example of someone who is outside the sex worker led organizations peer support systems. Heterosexual men who sell sex to women is a group of sex workers in Kampala that has been challenging for the activists to reach.

We got in contact with men who sell sex for women- agency after we had send in a question in a Facebook-group that we were looking for apartments in Kampala. We got a private message from someone asking if we were looking for male company during our stay in Uganda. Our answer was no, but that we would be very interested in meeting one of the sex workers. We got a reply that there was one man who was willing to meet us.

We met up with C at 20:00 in a rooftop restaurant in the city center. We sat down in a quiet corner of the bar. We explained what the purpose of the research was, and that he could share with as much as he felt comfortable with.

The agency C works is run by one person, who we will here refer to as the pimp. The agency has 12 male sex-workers and gets in touch with many of the clients through social media like Facebook. The agency targets western women, since it's apparently a lucrative business. The pimp started the agency when he/she realized there was a demand for discrete male escorts. C is referring to his colleagues as "boys", and that is why we use the same term in this part.

C is 25 years old and when we met him he had been in the agency for eight months. C has a college degree and worked as a salesman after school. C is the single provider for his family, he lives with his mother and is the oldest of many siblings. The money he made from his job was however not enough to cover his family's needs. The pimp is an old friend of C, and when C shared his problems, the pimp gave him the offer to start working for the agency. He first turned it down but when his family's financial situation got worse, he called the pimp and said he was ready to start working. He told his mother that he had gotten a better job and that he would be now able to provide better for the family.

C told us he would not be an escort for much longer, maybe only throughout this year. Sometimes the job is fun and he enjoys it, but some days C explained, he wakes up and feels guilt, "*this is not what I want to do*".

C lives at home with his family and when he is not working he is at home with people he loves and trusts. C used to have a girlfriend before. Since he started to work as an escort, he had less time to spend with her. He explained that it was hard for him to be intimate with her, "when you work with women, you don't want to go home and be intimate with your girlfriend. I couldn't do it". He understands why she left him, but hopes that he one day would get married.

The pimp makes all the connections and is the link between the sex workers and the clients. The payment is done through the pimp and the pimp sends the money to the sex workers through a phone service. Even though the business is doing well, the pimp is not looking to expand at the moment. To keep a high class, the pimp has high demands on the sex workers and if someone misbehaves they will be fired. The sex workers all have different looks and personalities to be able to match with the different clients' needs and wants.

C told us that he does not meet the pimp very often, but there would be some get-together with all the other boys every now and then. C meets up with the other escorts on regular basis without the pimp. He explains how the meetings with the other boys are important, they discuss the job, and share experiences. C also said he learns from the other escorts, they will help him with advices on how to meet different demands the clients have. Some of the other escorts also “goes fishing” on their own. C doesn’t. He wants to rest and have time for his family. But he also explains he takes his job seriously and wants to be fresh and strong for the next client.

In the beginning, C felt he had no one to talk to. No one in his family or his old friends knows what he is doing. Because of this he doesn’t spend much time at all with his old friends. One day he stopped by at an AIDS-info center and talked to a counselor. That helped him and he still goes there for counseling.

C explains that there are three kinds of clients. 1. They are in a relationship but have an unsatisfied sex life. 2. They want an adventure 3. Tourists or business women who want some discrete company. Most of the clients are western women from the third category.

Most of the clients want a discreet date, they don’t want to go out looking for company. The tourists are normally interested in a boyfriend experience, where they will be with the sex worker for a whole week or a night. The clients mostly treat him well, he explained it is hard for them to be disrespectful, and women generally are polite. When we asked about the safety-issues, C explained he always has contact with the pimp. The pimp knows where the escorts are going, and they will call when they are done. He always has a fully charged phone and phone-time when he meets a client. He also has a motorcycle-taxi that he can call even at night time. He explains it is much more difficult for women escorts. He doesn’t have to stand on the street or take other risks. The chances for him getting arrested are much smaller. None of the escorts have been arrested so far, but if anything would happen, he would call the pimp who would come to assist. C says he feels safe with the pimp. The pimp never demands him to work if he doesn’t want to. He also feels respected by the pimp and feels that he is taken care off.

The number of clients per week varies, sometimes he has three to four clients in a week, which he says is already quite exhausting. On average he meets three clients in a week. He often goes with the tourists for trips outside the city and outside the country. He gets 30 USD/client, if he spends longer time with a client, he still gets paid the same 30 USD/day. The prices are already negotiated between the pimp and the client and C therefore never negotiate money with the clients. The money never goes through the escort. The pimp provides the condoms and there is a policy to always use protection. They have a safety strategy that the pimp always knows where the sex workers are going and they contact the pimp after the service. The sex workers always have a phone with them in case of emergency and also have contact with motorcycle taxis working at night. The sex workers working for this pimp have never been arrested, they sell sex from internet and through social media and are therefore not as exposed as sex workers working from the streets.

When we asked C if he knew about any sex worker led organizations, he couldn’t recall any. When we named the nine organizations that work under Uganda Harmonized alliance, he had heard about one of them. He was not aware of the services available for sex workers and didn’t know that there was peer support available for him too. He said that everything was

taken care of by the pimp; the pimp provides them with all the information concerning safer sex work, legal aid and health care.

We acknowledge the difference between the sex workers who are using the peer support services of the different sex work organizations and those who don't use them for one reason or another. However, we could still see some similarities: they all have created some kinds of networks to protect themselves. The sex workers working from the sex bar and with the agency are not as vulnerable as the sex workers working in the slums like Bwaise. They have more money and target men and women with higher incomes. They probably don't have the same need for support services as the sex workers linked to organizations and they might not even identify themselves as sex workers. But talking to C, we saw someone that has put all his trust in one person, the pimp.

For the pimp not to mention different sex work friendly organizations might be a tactical choice, it is easier to benefit economically from a person with little knowledge. It is also likely that the pimp makes a lot of money and the men he/she hires only gets a small amount. We feel that getting involved with sex worker led organizations would increase transparency and protection for the sex workers who work through a pimp. In this case, sex work organizations can act as a union of the sex workers, where you can consult if the salary you are getting from your pimp is fair and that you know your rights as a worker.

CHAPTER SEVEN: PARALEGAL TRAINING

Paralegal training is a program HRAPF has developed to make it easier for marginalized groups to enjoy their legal and human rights. In the mapping-section there is more information about HRAPF as an organization. HRAPF train both LGBTI and sex workers to become paralegals, but we will mainly focus on sex workers. It is a close co-operation between the lawyers at HRAPF and the paralegals, but it has also opened up doors for cooperation with actors on the structural level. This chapter is divided into four parts, in the first part we will explain how the paralegal training is done and what the work is about, in the second part we will discuss the outcomes, in the third part we will look at what motivates the paralegals and in the fourth part we will focus on the challenges they face.

7.1 Becoming a paralegal

HRAPF works closely with sex workers and other marginalized groups. During their work, they realized that a lot could be done by the groups themselves. By teaching the legal first aid it would reduce the workload of HRAPF and also equip the marginalized groups with more skills. The paralegal system is a well-organized system, where the lawyers from HRAPF work with the sex workers to exchange knowledge and train sex workers with legal skills. In this part, we will focus more on how the sex workers and HRAPF work on a practical level. We will here look at what kind of methods they use, what kind of training they have and how the paralegal system is organized⁴.

How to become a paralegal

The paralegal training program has been developed by HRAPF. Through the paralegal program, HRAPF works with helping sexual minorities and sex workers in the Ugandan society with legal aid as well as helping them to claim their legal and human rights. Maria explains why they decided to start the paralegal program.

“So we wanted to get a gap of, you know, linking the communities to the lawyers. You know sometimes the LGBTI and sex workers may not be open to everyone, even the lawyers because of the perception that very many people have that you know that lawyers are arrogant, they are expensive. So they fear approaching lawyers so we thought that if we train the grass root persons, the people from the communities themselves to be paralegals, to get that legal knowledge, they can give the legal first aid to the different community members” Maria

Maria and HRAPF saw the difficulties of working with such marginalized groups. The groups they worked with had no or little trust in authorities and as Maria explains, they felt the need to bridge the gaps in order to reach the group. The idea of making a program for the grass root people, and to equip them with knowledge about HRAPF and legal rights was born.

The paralegal program is organized by HRAPF but with co-operation of the sex worker and LGBTI-led organizations. Maria, who is responsible for the training describes how the training is divided into three different parts:

“The training are in three modules, the first module is about introducing the concept of paralegal and the legal system, that is what does it mean to be a paralegal, what are the ethics, how are you supposed to behave, then the legal system. What is the legal system in

⁴ See appendix four for information about informants.

Uganda, what are the various courts that we have, what are the various NGOs that we have that provide legal aid services? Then the second module is purely about criminal law and the procedure...So that is some of the things we teach paralegal during that second module, criminal law and procedure. What are the rights, in case you feel your rights has been violated, where should you go to for example, the constitutional law interpret various provisions, violations.. And the third module is purely on human rights and specific activism. Human rights, because we believe all the persons have rights in the respect of their sexual orientation, sexual identity and the kind of work you do...” Maria

The extensive training program begins with one part where they discuss the concept and recruitments of paralegals. In the first part, they also discuss some basic knowledge of the legal system in Uganda and the different actors in the field. In the second part, they go in more depth with the different laws that are being used and how the procedure of court works. They also discuss the Ugandan constitution and how it works. The third part is mainly human rights, how it works and how it can be used. With these three parts, the sex work paralegals get a deep knowledge about both the legal system in Uganda, the actors in the field, and the rights they can claim. Another part of the paralegal training is to introduce the paralegals to the actors in the field.

“In case of a court session if a lawyer is going to court for an offense then a paralegal still go hand in hand and observe what really takes place in court. When a Client come and they can also observe how they are interviewed so they can get the practical feel of what was facilitated on the trainings. We also have field visits, for example at the police station and establish report with the police station and also introduce them as paralegals. and also some court sessions, they will attend some court sessions to you know get familiar with the procedures that takes place in court” Maria

As a part of the training, Maria explains how HRAPF takes the trainees to court and to the police. This is the more practical part of the training, so they will better understand what was taught during the trainings. They will see how the paralegals should address the police, and how to behave during court sessions. Basically, the paralegal training is a combination of both studying the laws and rights and also to see what the legal field looks like.

HRAPF trains new people every year, and the program is done over the period of nine months. Each of the three parts in the training is done during three days each, with three months in between. There are other organizations that train paralegals as well, but mostly focus on human rights. HRAPF is the only one training sex workers and sexual minorities. However, the program has helped the sex work led organizations to spread the paralegal knowledge within their organizations.

“We are two at the office [paralegals], but we trained some peers. We have peers at the base. If they arrest someone, she goes there, she finds out what’s the charges” Anne

Anne explains in this quote how the paralegals also train the members at their own organization, WONETHA, so that they will know how to act in case of an arrest. This way the knowledge acquired by the paralegal, will be spread among the sex workers in the organization making more members legally competent.

Standards of the paralegals

There are certain demands on who can become a paralegal since the reputation is important. The paralegals end up having a lot of responsibilities towards both the sex work community and HRAPF. To recruit people to serve the sex work community best is important and mainly done through the sex worker led organizations. HRAPF doesn't recruit the paralegals themselves. The organizations cooperating with them will choose who to send to the paralegal program.

"As long as your organization recommends you, because we sit down with the organization, the head of the organization and lay out our legal project and leave it to them, to recommend someone that has that criteria I told you about, to recommend someone that is [the] best sort to be trained as a paralegal. Someone that will really serve the purpose" Maria

Maria explains how it is up to the organization to find someone that will go through the paralegal program. It is the organization's members it will help in the end, and the organization also knows best who is suited for such a responsibility. As Maria mentions in the following quote, here is some criteria to be fulfilled in order to be trained as a paralegal.

"Yes, we have a criteria that we use for those who want to become a paralegal. First of all you must have attained at least we call it S-four, senior four... You must have a good knowledge in the English language because we conduct the training in the English, as much as we sometimes interpret in Luganda, which is the commonly used local language here in Kampala. But still, legal language is very very complicated, and also if you try to simplify it, someone has to understand the English language... They have to be very dedicated and ready to serve their communities, someone who has a spirit of voluntarism, as I told you we don't pay these paralegals any money, because there is none." Maria

The paralegals have had to finish senior four in school, which is approximately nine years of school. Maria describes that in Kampala, Luganda and English are the two most common languages. However, Uganda has many languages in use, so the legal language is English. Maria also mentions in this quote that the paralegals have to be devoted in order to work as paralegals. The paralegals don't get paid, and it's up to the organization they are working with to compensate them. To keep the paralegals updated and to continue the cooperation with them, HRAPF arrange meetings with them on a regular basis.

"Yes, we usually have quarterly meetings... One, discuss the work they have been engaged in, and share their work, so it's basically sharing their work they have been engaged in. Get comments of the fellow paralegals, get maybe ideas or recommendations from them if they maybe have an issue that they are handling how they best can go about it.... What they have been doing and also discuss the challenges and also recommend what could be done better." Maria

Maria describes in this quote how the lawyers on HRAPF also work as mentors to the paralegals. When they arrange the meetings with the paralegals, they discuss different cases and also help each other to get new ideas. It is also an opportunity for the paralegals to discuss challenges with HRAPF. This way, the communication will be both ways, and it's a way for both paralegals and HRAPF to improve their work. The meetings will also function to evaluate that quarter. With the quarterly meetings, HRAPF will keep close contact with the paralegals, and the paralegals may also develop a relationship with each other.

How the paralegals work on the field

The paralegals in the different organizations have created different strategies on how they work as paralegals. HRAPF doesn't decide how the different organizations should divide the work among the paralegals or how they should organize it as long as they work closely with other sex workers on the field. Anne from WONETHA explains their work method like this;

"We have a security phone, a security number, when we go to the fields, we make sure we give out that number ... when they call me, we have a security phone, if a peer or a member calls me that they have arrested someone, I go straight to police. I talk to them, I talk to the officer in charge who has the files, I ask him, what happened? What charges are you charging her? If it's not, I go to the OC⁵, I explain myself, I'm this and this, I'm coming from an organization, I'm a sex worker" Anne

WONETHA has a security phone, where members can call when they are in need of legal help, or when they see friends being arrested. The numbers are given to members but also spread among sex workers that are not connected to WONETHA. Anne explains that she is in charge of the security phone, but they take turns to have it. Anne further explains how she, when she gets a call goes down to the police station and tries to find the officer in charge. The officer in charge is responsible for the arrest, and as Anne mentions, she needs to know what crime they are charging the sex worker of. This will be important when if she later on has to contact HRAPF. Raj, who also works as a paralegal, but through another organization explains how he operates as a paralegal.

"Sometimes, someone that has been arrested, they call or they text you and say, hey, Raj, I'm being taken to this police. In most cases, our training is, tell me where you are arrested from and where there they are taking you. Because they will not allow you to talk many words, so they will be like Raj I'm at abc, and I'm going to this police [station]" Raj

Raj explains how the person being arrested will have Raj's number and call him. Raj uses his private phone. Raj knows they are not allowed to have long conversations, but the most important information is where the sex workers are when being arrested and which police station they are taken to. The paralegals have different systems when it comes to the phone service, but it is clear that the most important thing is to make sure sex workers have the numbers and know who to call.

"Even at our meetings, paralegals used to give out their numbers. If anything happens, just call this one or this number. So I put the numbers on the chart and people could copy them. So all sex workers got to know through friends and other paralegals" Kim

The paralegals also come to other sex workers meetings and give out their numbers. Kim, being a sex worker, helps out by also spreading the number in her community. Spreading the paralegals numbers is a crucial part of the paralegal system since the police is not giving out this information when a sex worker is being arrested.

"Of course you will not know all the sex worker that are being arrested. We only know those that is in our circle. Though sometimes, there are sex workers on TV, they arrested those sex workers on TV, and on papers. We just go to the police direct." Raj

⁵ Officer in Charge

Raj explains another way of the paralegals to find sex workers in need of legal help. The sex work community is big, and Rajs explains here that it can be difficult to reach sex workers that are not connected with them. It is also an occupation with a lot of mobility. Since sex workers sometimes get exposed in the media when being arrested, Raj and other paralegals will use that as a way to reach sex workers in need of legal help. The issue of sex workers getting exposed in media will be discussed later as well. Raj and the paralegals he works with have also divided Kampala among them and given different paralegals different areas.

“So I will know, is this my district/jurisdiction, cause we have districts as paralegals. Me, I operate at Kawempe, and here. So if you call and you are in... I will know, that’s ok, he is in.... so I will call the other to do it.... Yes, we have different areas. Not that particular, but to ease the work we divided it between our self. Though, sometimes, some sex worker prefer individual paralegal, so, ah, Raj, you understand me, or no, this person will do me best, so someone can call and say, Raj, call ABC and say I’m in this shit.” Raj

As mentioned in this quote, Raj and the paralegals he works with have designated areas they work with. This way they can be more effective and also create a relationship with the police officers at different stations. However, Raj also mentions that this is not static. Some paralegals have built up a relationship and trust with some specific sex workers, and some paralegals are more specialized in for instance LGBTI sex workers. The significant part is the co-operation between the different paralegals. In order to make the paralegal system effective, they need to work closely together. Paralegals also work towards the rest of the communities. They function as a link between the sex workers and other actors in the society.

“Yes, we co-operate with the police, we do the dialogue meetings. If the arrests is too much, we... I organize a meeting, which is a dialogue meeting. I invite the police, the local chairmen, the defense, I call the DPC of that station, the OC, even the OC in operation. Because they do those operations in night, then I call them to the meeting. Even I call HRAPF, HRAPF-lawyers. They help us explain but even us, even we ask them things, why are you beating us?” Anne

Anne explains that they organize meetings for the different stakeholders when needed. This way the paralegals, as Maria explained earlier, will be the link to other actors in the society. Anne describes how she as a paralegal organizes the dialogue meetings when there is a conflict of interest. Most of the meetings, the police will be invited, and HRAPF will work as a mediator. They will have these meetings when, for instance the arrests has increased or there are police violations. Anne mentions that they invite the local chairmen. The local chairmen work as leaders in the community and a good relationship with that person will benefit the sex workers.

“Also, some relations that is key that is worth mentioning that different organizations and different sex work activists has established relations on the LC-level⁶, the local leaders. Because those are government leaders. That we have relations with them, and the brothels, and the different sex work hotspots, we try the best to see that we are in touch with the LC, so that if anything, we talk to them, and it works. When you look at Bwaise, the chairperson, he is our friend. If you look at ... the chairmen there is our friend. Anything happens to a neko⁷, a sex worker, he is there to defend.” Raj

⁶ Local Chairmen

⁷ Local word for sex worker

The local leader has an important role in the communities, as Raj explain, they are elected government leaders. To develop a relationship with them, and also, brothel owners, will increase the sex workers security and influence in the community. Raj explains that he has a good relationship with the local leader, and the leader will be there for the sex workers to make sure they have decent working conditions.

The paralegals end up working on different levels in the society, both with the sex workers, but also with the lawyers at HRAPF and the police. Creating a working relationship with the different actors, the paralegals can influence the sex work scene and help them enjoy their legal rights. But HRAPF also hopes that the work the paralegals do, will help the sex workers to change their future;

“So we are now doing that research and also encourage the sex workers to document their violations and see how we can move towards decriminalization of sex work. Challenge that provision of living on earnings of prostitution. Yeah, but that is done, you know, over time. You don’t just wake up one day and there is decriminalization of sex work. You must have the documentation and really grounds and strategies for that.” Maria

HRAPF and the paralegals hope to change the legal scene for the future. Maria explains how decriminalization is one of the goals they are aiming for. In order to do that, they want to have documentation on how the laws that are there now are not protecting the sex workers. In order to challenge the laws, Maria explains they need to have a lot of documentation, and that’s why it is important for the paralegals to know how and what to document.

7.2 Positive outcomes of the paralegal training

The Paralegal training has challenged the corrupt legal system in Uganda. But it has also equipped the sex work community with tools to fight for their human and legal rights. By raising awareness and teaching the sex workers about the laws, they have a better chance of fighting the system. The respondents discuss different kinds of outcomes due to the paralegal training. The results of the training can be seen both diverse and extensive; it is about questioning norms as much as fighting for the right to exist. Under the code results, we recognized different themes that are parts of the results, the ones we found most relevant was “social change”, “empowerment” and “awareness”.

Paralegals and social change

In this chapter, we will look into how paralegal training has created changes in the society they live in. Paralegal training is not only about equipping sex workers with legal skills, it is also about bridging the gap between sex workers and the rest of the community. They have created a way of working with other actors with the goal of getting accepted and understood. Social change is about both individual and structural changes. We will here discuss some of the social changes that we found.

HRAPF and the paralegals have a close co-operation with the police and other local leaders in order to create change. The co-operation has led to a deeper understanding among the community.

“You know, some sex workers really tell their stories in how they came across becoming sex worker. And also, police officers are human beings and they get touched by the stories of sex workers and accept them to you know go in with their work..” Maria

Maria explains how the co-operation with the police creates a bigger understanding and respect for the sex workers. When they work together, the police get to know them as persons, which Maria explains, creates more acceptance among the police. With a more humane approach towards sex workers, the co-operation with the police has shown to be effective. The paralegals and the police has now to some extent also developed a more professional relationship. The results from working more closely with the police are also mentioned by Raj in this quote:

“...because people now fear just coming and arresting sex workers, because they know, these are people who know their rights. And sometimes, now days most paralegals are now known at certain police stations and when you go there, they are like, ah, Raj, you are back here again.” Raj

The police stations where Raj works as a paralegal now have respect for him and they are developing a working relationship. With the mutual respect and work-relationship between the police and the sex workers, the violations have decreased and it will be helpful in the fight against discrimination and stigmatization. Many of the respondents have an optimistic belief that the paralegal project and their other activities will make a change in the future. And in order to create this change, they need many supporters.

“Things will change... Because long ago here in Uganda, like 10-15 years back people used to do it with people who live with HIV. They couldn’t sit near anyone that was negative. They were really discriminated a lot, a lot! But now, people are welcoming them.” Kim

Kim compares the sex work movement with the awareness that was created concerning the HIV-positive people. It is a good example of how through raising awareness and fighting discrimination the society can become more sensitive and understanding towards marginalized groups and in the end, create social change. The respondents explain that the harassment and violations by the police now has decreased as a result of the co-operation with the police and the paralegal training. HRAPF emphasize in their training that no one is above the law and gives them the tools and knowledge of how to report a police officer and which rights you have.

“And also the paralegal preach the gospel to their fellows. So actually, most of them know that if they are violated, then they can report the police to the professional standards unit, at least I’m very certain. Because we have preached that over and over again.” Maria

Maria explains how the paralegal training also teaches them how to report the police in case of violation. She explains, this is something they talk about during their outreaches, this information is later on spread in the sex work community. With the increased co-operation with the police, the paralegals and the lawyers, the sex workers are also more willing to report abusive clients. It is however a complex situation since sex work is criminalized in Uganda.

These are all positive social changes that have been done by the paralegal training. The competence has risen and the effects have been that the sex workers are more empowered and less afraid. Knowing that justice is not so distant it will in the future create more social change

for both the sex workers and the LGBTI, which is important also from the human right aspects. But of course, the road to justice and human rights is long, and in order to enjoy the rights, the system has to change.

Empowerment and paralegals

One of the big outcomes from the paralegal training is how it has empowered the sex workers. Through trainings, the paralegals now feel they can take control over their lives and their environment, which is what empowerment is about. The Paralegal training gives the sex workers the knowledge of the laws, which not only empowers them in legal situations, but also as sex workers and members of the community. Through the trainings, the paralegals have gotten a better knowledge of how the constitution works, but also how and why to claim their rights. Some of the respondents questioned their own position in the society, but as paralegals, they now feel they have a right to exist.

“...even for us, we sometimes don’t understand ourselves, who are we. Why I’m doing this? But when we got empowered through trainings, we know our rights, that we are people, we need care, we need freedom” Anne

This explains how Anne earlier questioned her right to exist. She mentions how it was difficult to understand who she was and why she did sex work, but through the paralegal training and her connection to an organization now respects her herself and her occupation. Knowledge is always power, and through the trainings, Anne felt her value as a human increased.

In a country where the police will use your lack of knowledge to your disadvantage, the paralegal training changes the power structure. The sex workers are now more aware of how and what they can say and do without getting arrested. In the question how paralegal training has changed the scenes for sex workers, Raj answers:

“Of course, one, the person, a sex worker could not stand and say sex work is work. A sex worker would not stand up and say they have rights. Now, you will be surprised. Sex workers stand and say, it’s my right to stand on this street, a sex worker would say: it’s my right to go to this bar with my own money” Raj

Raj emphasizes in this quote that the legal empowerment has had positive effects in other aspects as well. Raj and other sex workers are fighting the discrimination and demanding their rights to stand on the street and go to bars. Raj says that the sex workers now identify sex work as work, which also empowers them in order to claim rights. Through the comprehensive training in the laws, the paralegals get tools to help the sex work community. As a result, they are able to question arrests and through this also challenging the lower police officers lack of knowledge in the basics of the laws.

“Now the sex workers are able to talk, and they are able to defend themselves on the streets. That according to this article you can’t arrest me just like that. If me, I’m going to the police, I know now that as a sex worker if you are going to arrest me, above 48 hours to take me to court, you have to give me an unconditional bond. I know that a bond is free at the police. I know that a bail at court is a constitutional right...” Raj

Raj explains that he now knows the constitutional rights and is aware of how long the arrest can be. He and other sex workers can question the police when they want to arrest them and

ask based on what charges. The training has also empowered them in the sense that they are no longer as afraid of the police, they are aware of the consequences of being arrested and that they have rights and lawyers to make sure that their rights are protected.

“The paralegal helped me to be.. to empower me, that I don’t have to run, when I see a police officer, they are people like me, I don’t have to fear them.” Anne

Anne knows that she has people behind her, and by knowing the procedure of being arrested, she has more control over it. It is easier for them to work against the system if they are not afraid of it. It is clear in this chapter how crucial it is for everyone to know their legal and human rights. The sex workers now want to demand their right to exist. Through legal knowledge, the sex workers now get empowered and also spread this to their fellow sex workers.

Awareness and paralegals

Awareness is an important part of the paralegal training and goes hand in hand with the empowerment theme. An important element of the paralegal training is to create awareness about the laws and how the sex workers themselves can take part of the justice system. Even though a lot of the awareness is also mentioned in the chapter about empowerment, we will in this chapter focus on how the paralegal training is spreading knowledge in their community and how the training has helped the sex workers to start working against the police-corruption.

The paralegals help out on the outreaches with HRAPF, and are supposed to be a link between the lawyers, the community and the sex workers. With the very close collaboration HRAPF and the sex workers have, HRAPF is able to work on grass root level and do awareness outreaches where and when they are needed.

“Because we were receiving a lot of complains, where sex workers now were violating their own rights. Where sex workers were assaulting each other, steals money from the other, threatens the other, so sex workers themselves were going to the police, reporting themselves, so we decided to make an outreach in that area to first of all educate them about their rights and obligations...” Maria

Maria explains a specific situation in a neighborhood where sex workers were not getting along and reporting each other. In cases like that, Maria explained that they call the police, the local leaders and sex workers in that area and do an outreach where they discuss the issues together.

Another example of how the paralegals work with awareness is the sex work communities fight against corruption. The paralegals are teaching the sex workers not to pay bribes, in hope that this in the future will create change. Many of the respondents explain that they used to pay bribes to the police before, but with the new knowledge, they are refusing to pay.

“I would not [pay the bribes], I would rather be arrested. Because if you bribe them, they will come every day. Then we will be working for them” Anne

With the paralegal training, Anne is now more aware of the consequences of bribes. She recognizes that the system of bribes doesn’t help them, but instead makes the police more dependent on arresting sex workers. The fight against bribes among the sex workers

challenges the way the police works, and will hopefully challenge the corrupt legal system. Anne and other respondents explain that the fear of the police would make them pay bribes in order to avoid getting arrested. But as they now know the system, they don't fear the police and they know they have legal aid, more sex workers accept getting arrested.

“But we encourage them not to give money. Because if you give them [the police] money, they like, ah, I'm poor I have nothing in my pocket. Let me go and arrest.” Anne

Also in this quote, Anne mentions how the corruption creates a vicious circle where the sex workers will work for the police and the police will become dependent on arresting sex workers. The police will use their power and exploit the fear of sex workers in order to make money. Through the paralegal training, where HRAPF teach them about the consequences of paying bribes, the sex workers has become more aware of the oppressing system. The respondents explain they hope this will decrease the arrests from the police, and that the results will be a more just society.

7.3 Motivation to paralegal training

One of the questions that were always in our head was why these people are willing to expose their faces in media and become spokespersons in such a stigmatized field as sex work? They risk their wellbeing, become exposed in media and excluded from their families. The paralegals devote their time helping other sex work for it. In this chapter about what motivates them we have divided it into two themes, “Needs of activism” and “Reasons to become an activist”.

Needs as motivation

It was clear that many of the respondents felt there were needs for sex workers that motivated them to become activists and work as paralegals. One of the main needs in the sex work community was to spread awareness and knowledge about the legal system. The needs of the sex workers, needs of a just legal system, and needs of safety was what motivates the activists to continue to fight and educate themselves as paralegals. All the respondents underline the need for both sex workers and the police to become more educated when it come human rights and the law-system. When asked if they learn basic law in school, all the respondents said no, which is explained in this quote;

“No, rights are not taught in school, unless you go to law school” Raj

This is something we find alarming, that not even the basic knowledge about the constitution and the laws is taught in school. It will also be easier for the police to violate the laws, if the people lack the knowledge about their rights. Without the paralegals and the legal knowledge, sex workers are easy targets for the police. The sex workers are also easy targets for discrimination in the communities. Paralegal training and lawyers will not be the answer to all their problems, but when the legal service is closer to the sex work community, they will be empowered and able to defend themselves better in the community.

“We can sensitize⁸ the community. Because, some communities, they talk bad things about the sex workers. Because the sex worker normally wear short things, they say, we have children, they are naked, what and what. They talk bad things about the sex worker. If we sensitize the

⁸ To make (someone) more aware of something

community and that problem of complaining about sex worker can at least reduce ... if your neighbors finds out you are a sex worker, it will be gossip in the villages. They can go to the whole village and tell.” Anne

Anne describes the need for a more understanding society in general. With the stigma that comes with their occupation, many in the communities around them discriminate them, and as Anne says, there is a chance people will go to their home-village and tell their families that they sell sex. Further, Anne describes that the people in the communities show little understanding towards the sex workers. The legal empowerment will make it easier for them to know their basic human rights, and hopefully be able to claim their rights to co-exist.

The last need we will mention that was discussed with many sex workers and also mentioned in the interviews was the need of medications in prison. In the dialogues with the police, the sex work activists works hard on making it available for the sex workers that is detained to get access of ART.

“...medicine, like ART. Some sex workers has HIV. So the police arrest us sex workers and we don’t get the medicine in time.” Lucy

During our research, we met various people working with health promotion and specifically with reducing the numbers of people (in our case sex workers) infected with HIV. As Lucy explains in the quote, medication is not available in the arrest, which in the end will be contra productive; the ARTs keeps the viruses on a low level, which decreases the risk of spreading the disease. And Uganda has the goal of zero new infections (Uganda AIDS commission, 2011). The respondents told us that some of the sex workers are detained for weeks in wait for a trial. This puts the HIV-positive sex workers in a difficult and vulnerable situation where they might prefer to pay bribes and not put their health at risk.

Reasons to become a paralegal

The needs for the sex workers are interlinked with reasons for the sex work activists to continue to fight for their rights. One of the main reasons for the paralegals to continue to fight is the wish for the laws to change. All the respondents had legal change as one of the goals.

“Of course, the laws have to change. We should advocate for the laws to change ... So I think we need to advocate for the laws to change. It really, like, these laws where they will be arresting clients, or the one where you are not allowed to put on what you want, we should advocate for them to stop immediately, they should stop at least. I think they should be banned. Because if people just know that there is a law about this and this, they don’t know what is the law. They just do whatever they want.” Kim

What Kim explains is not only the wish for the laws to change, but she also explains the problems with the laws. Kim further explains how people many times take the laws in their own hands, which affects the sex work community. The respondents will therefore also suffer from the public that decides to take the law in their own hands. With the situation many sex workers face, one can also say that one of the motivations to fight is that there is not much to lose. The sex workers difficult situation is also something that HRAPF sees as a problem, which is mentioned in this quote;

“The first challenge is of course the criminalization, because it opens up a lot of issues of the rights, the sex worker rights versus criminalization of sex workers. So some people think that when something is criminalized you really don’t have any right. If you are LGBTI and its criminalized or a sex worker and it is criminalized, you have no rights, you have nothing, totally, you don’t have anything.” Maria

Maria confirms the problems that Kim explains in the quote above. With the laws they have, it is very difficult for the sex workers to claim their rights and work in a safe environment. HRAPF and sex worker led organizations work hard on petitions against the laws that affect them. All the respondents had the same goal; to work towards decriminalization. HRAPF is not only working on decriminalization, but they also question the laws that affect the sex workers the most, the rogue and vagabond law;

“To see how that research can help us challenge that provision in court, because for us we think it’s just a useless provision in court that the police officers uses to arrest sex worker and just sometimes violate their rights and waste state money on their arresting people who will never be prosecuted” Maria

Maria points out that the law is not very effective, and since the police never shows up on the trials, most sex workers are released. According to Maria the law has, when it comes to sex workers, no real purpose more than to harass and violate sex workers and their rights. One of the main reasons to activism, when it comes to legal rights is therefore to change the laws that affect the sex workers.

The sex workers, as mentioned earlier does not have that much to lose when they become paralegals. Instead they have a lot to gain, such as a better network to lean on, easier to get justice and the tools to fight against the laws that discriminates them. Maria however, is in another position. Her reasons for fighting for the sex workers rights differ, since she is neither a sex worker nor a part of the LGBTI-community. She was motivated by other reasons than the sex workers, and she also had more choices to begin with.

“I want to fight for a cause. I want to create impact in the society and at least you know, be an activist and create legacy. So they think you know, Maria fought for the sex worker and the LGBTI. You leave that impact as an activist” Maria

Maria explains how she wants to make a difference in the community, and fight for a cause. What makes this interesting is that she also explained in her interview that she had no real relationship or connection with these issues before, but simply explained that she just was not homophobic and an open minded person. Her goal and reasons to continue is also the hope to make an impact and changes for the better. This is how she explains what she wants to achieve;

“...and also see at least the decriminalization process started, because it will be a long time, I don’t know my faith, I don’t know my life, God knows. But I hope God is willing to see that sex work is also recognized as work in Uganda.” Maria

With this final quote, Maria explains that she wants to see Uganda go through a decriminalization process, and that is one of her motivations to continue to help the sex workers.

7.4 Challenges in the paralegal field

The paralegal training deals with a lot of challenges that are both internal and external. The challenges they face are both in the system, where justice is a complicated procedure, the police, which are not well educated and sometimes corrupt, and the sex workers themselves, which is not a homogenous group, but a group with many different needs and motivations. Not all of them are looking for justice or changes. We have divided the part about challenges in three different themes, “Challenges inside the legal system”, “Challenges with the police” and “Challenges in the paralegal system”.

Challenges inside the legal system

The legal system in Uganda has, like in most other countries, some flaws that make the road to justice complicated. Some of the issues within the legal system make it difficult for sex workers, and other stigmatized groups to get the justice they deserve. First of all, when a sex worker is arrested, they can be released on bond. A bond is supposed to be free, and normally this procedure is done by the paralegals. However, in order to get released, the arrested person has to have people standing surety⁹ for them. If the arrested person doesn’t show up in court, the sureties have to pay a fine. The respondents explained that the people standing surety therefore is mainly close friends or family, but they also explained that it can be difficult to find people who are willing to stand sureties.

“The most challenge I face is the sureties, to look for sureties. Because as you know, sex workers, we move, if we hear this side, here is money we go, this side its money, we go there. So then if you get arrested, you have to get two people to stand for you when it comes to bail in court. Then finding sureties is a very big part.” Anne

Anne explains how finding sureties is a big part of being a paralegal. The sex workers move around and it can be hard to find people willing to stand surety for that person. Sex workers not only move around a lot, they also come from all over the country to work in Kampala, and when arrested, they might not have close friends or family to help them. If they don’t find sureties, the sex worker will remain arrested.

Another challenge the sex workers face when it comes to the legal system is how difficult it can be for them to claim justice in case of abuse. The respondents answer differs when it comes to the question about going to the police and report cases of violence. Kim explained that as a trans woman she would not go and report abuse, but wished for a law that made it easier to report clients.

“They should instead put a law to arrest clients who harass sex workers. Cause some clients don’t pay. Some clients take one, and you will find out they are three or four [clients at the same time].” Kim

Kim explains that since some sex workers are reluctant to report, they are easy targets. There is not much to do if the client refuses to pay, or put you in a situation where you have up to three to four clients at the same time. We will discuss the issue of reporting clients more in the chapter on challenges with the police, because this is not only a legal problem, but also an

⁹ A person standing as a guarantee for the arrested person

issue of the police not respecting sex workers. What some of the respondents explained however is that the discriminatory laws against LGBTI makes the LGBTI sex workers much more vulnerable. The sex workers we interviewed that were LGBTI were not likely to go and report a violation unless they had legal presentation with them. Raj explained how he had a client who a few days after he bought sex from Raj came to his apartment and destroyed his TV. Raj went to the police and reported the client, and the client reported him as a response.

“What happened was, that after a couple of days, this person reported me, that I sodomized that person, you get it? I was called to police, I made a statement and I was later released on bond, even I reported there yesterday. So that’s the trend. But for me, I’m a strong person, I will tell you yes, if you say that in the law, it’s clear that if he can prove the allegation, proof it. But not so many people will be like me. So most of people, that’s how they end up not going for justice, because we know, me I’m a sex worker, a gay person, me I go, to seek justice, instead, this person might blackmail me, turn against me...” Raj

Raj ended up becoming reported and arrested after he reported the client who came to his apartment and turned violent. Sodomy¹⁰ is illegal in Uganda, and clients can use that law to their advantage. With the discriminatory laws and the anti-gay society, the LGBTI sex workers are much more vulnerable when it comes to claiming legal rights. Raj also explains that since he has the knowledge of the laws, he has another position, he knows what he can report and what he can’t report. He also has legal presentation, HRAPF.

As we already have mentioned the problems with the bribes, we will not discuss that much further. There is however one big challenge when it comes to corruption in the legal system and that is the low income among the police.

“So, they are like, please I have 50 000 [UGX], can you release me? This is a police officer that is paid very little money by the government that has a very big family to look after, so the sight of 50 000 [UGX] really, he can’t fail to take it.” Maria

Maria explains in this quote that it is hard for the police to turn down bribes when they have families to support and in the end bribes can be seen as a solution. So what Maria points out in this quote is that this is also a structural problem, where the police, who should work to keep the country safe, many times have a hard time supporting themselves on their salary.

Challenges with the police

There are also challenges within the police force that makes the paralegal difficult from time to time. For the paralegal program to work, it is crucial the police understand and respect what the paralegals do. The whole concept is that the paralegals can do the first legal help before they call in lawyers, but if they are not respected, the paralegals can’t do what they are supposed to and the concept is lost.

The issues with the police are something all respondents saw as a challenge. They all agreed on how crucial it is for the police to recognize the paralegal system. However, they also saw the police ignorance as more than a paralegal problem.

¹⁰ Sex that in the Ugandan context is considered “unnatural”, for example, anal-sex.

“What they need to continue to work on is on how to sensitize the police and the juridical system. And the leaders like the LC, local chairmen, and even the police; they need to be sensitized a lot about the sex workers...” Kim

Kim explains how she wishes the police, the juridical system and the local chairmen to become sensitized and more understanding when it comes to sex workers and LGBTI. This is something that HRAPF and the different sex worker led organizations work on when they have their awareness sessions, but obviously it is something that needs to be worked on more. The question is of course, if it is only HRAPF and the sex worker led organizations that should do all the work, and what kind of responsibility the state has. Another challenge when it comes to sensitize the police and teach them about the paralegal concept is the constant circulation of the police.

“Because the police officers has changed from time to time. To some police, like Katwe police station, have an OC [officer in charge] today. One week, we go to Katwe, this officer not there. Already he has changed the place. So that is challenge....yes, they are moving around too much, and that is challenge for paralegals” Lucy

Lucy explains how difficult it can be as a paralegal when they move around in the extend they do. This is something many respondents explained as a difficulty, especially when they move policemen from the rural areas to Kampala. With this constant rotation of the police, creating awareness among the police is a never ending job for the sex workers. And of course, it demands constant education in the paralegal system. Even with the awareness sessions among the police, the respondents explained that some groups are difficult to help as a paralegal. And that was mainly the trans people;

“Yes, transgender sex workers are hard to help. Because every time you go to police and try to help a transgender person, you are stigmatized too. To be another transgender, or a gay, homosexual. Sometimes it becomes a little difficult. In most of such cases, when they come up, we want to send the lawyers. Yes, because, they will ask, how do you know him..” Raj

Raj explains when a trans person is arrested, they most of the time call HRAPF immediately. The risk of helping a trans person is that they are stigmatized as well. When Raj or another paralegal go to help a trans person, they will be asked how they know the person and in the end be stigmatized too. It also explains how important role HRAPF has in the LGBTI community.

The last challenge we will mention when it comes to the police is the exposure of the sex workers in the media. Many of the respondent's witness about, when arrested, the police will call in the media to take pictures of the arrested persons and expose them in the media. Even if sex workers are later released and free of charges, they are still punished with having their faces in the media as a sex worker

“Yes, this is challenge. The police take sex worker to the media, so that is challenge, because we have children, we have family, mothers. So the police go to the media, they put us there which is not good. It is bad”. Lucy

Being exposed in the media is seen as a constant threat for many sex workers. Their family members might not know they are sex workers, and the exposure can lead to discrimination in their neighborhoods. But Lucy also emphasizes the fact that they are humans, with families

and children. They do not want everyone to know their profession since they know the stigma that comes with it. The LGBTI respondents explained that they are more exposed in the media than the straight female sex workers. Simply because it sells more. When we asked Raj about the consequences after being exposed in media, he answers:

“Of course, that was the worse. Cause no one would know I was arrested, and not everyone knew I was a sex worker. But then they see me on TV..ohh...then everyone started to look at me, actually that’s how I ended up moving here. I had to leave my old residence to here.” Raj

Raj was exposed in the TV as a gay sex worker, and had to move to a safer house. But that is just one of the consequences of being exposed in the media. They are harassed on the streets, by neighbors and excluded from their families. Both Raj and Kim explain that after being exposed in media as much as they have, they cannot use public transportation anymore. They live with a constant fear of being recognized and harassed because of the double stigma of being both LGBTI and a sex worker. However, it is worth mentioning that it is not only sex workers that are targeted by the media, but everyone that is arrested can be exposed in the media. It is a sort of double punishment that goes against many different human right principles. This also feeds the system of mob-justice that is a problem in Uganda.

Challenges within the paralegal system

The sex work movement and the paralegal training also face several challenges. One of the challenges that are similar to the challenge they have with the police is the circulation of sex workers. This makes their job as paralegals to spread awareness a constant challenge and a never ending job.

“But the problem is one, every day, a sex worker moves out of the street, a new one comes...” Raj

Raj explains how the sex workers move in and out, and that their job with spreading awareness in the sex work community becomes a never ending job. And that also affects the paralegals job, to constant be out there, teaching the new sex workers about their legal rights. Another issue is of course if the paralegals themselves stop working as paralegals or sex workers. Maria explains that the sex workers they have educated as paralegals most of the time continue to work as paralegals and put a lot of devotion in their job, but with AHA, that was in use 2014 made some of the LGBTI paralegals leave the country and seek asylum;

“Some paralegals are very very active and there are those who are not very active. For example, in the total of 37 actually 5 has gone for asylum. They have left the country and have gone for asylum, so of course those once remain with the skills which are personal law but cannot help any other members of the society. So some of those challenges, we really don’t have control over them” Maria

Maria explains that five of the 37 paralegals they have educated with legal skills have sought asylum in other countries. This is specifically the LGBTI paralegals, and it affects the LGBTI community the most. This is of course a challenge for the sex work and LGBTI movement, when the activism, the sexual orientation or their profession in the end makes them leave the country, they take their skills with them.

A difficulty for the paralegals is also the lack of funding. The sex workers do not have to pay to be trained as paralegals, however, they do not get paid doing the paralegal services either. Some of the bigger sex work organizations have some money to support the paralegals, but it is otherwise dependent on the sex workers themselves to help out and pay for the costs.

“I think that sometimes, you know the facilitation is too little. Sometimes a case comes up, they call you and you can get there, you don’t have money to jump on a boda boda. Sometimes you reach the sex worker, and they need to eat, they don’t get food in the cells. And you can’t give them enough” Raj

The paralegals sometimes have money in their organization but sometimes they have to pay for it themselves. If the paralegals don’t have the money to go to the arrest, it can be difficult for them to help their fellow sex workers in need.

The job for the paralegals is not done when they have released their fellow sex worker with a bond. Many times the paralegal has to continue help escorting them to court.

“The bad thing we have, if they release them on bail, we tell them they have come and report on this date, they give you a date. When you don’t go back, the sex workers, if released, he doesn’t want to go back and report. They told us that if you go and report, that file will be closed because there is no evidence that you were rogue and vagabond. If the file is closed, you don’t have any case. But they don’t want to go and report.” Anne

The system of bond and bail works if the arrested person comes back to court when called. This can be inconvenient, because they can be called several times to show up in court before the case is dismissed. When dismissed, as Anne explains, there is no criminal record of you. If the sex worker doesn’t go back for the court session, they become a fugitive of the state. When asked about the reason why they hesitate to go back to court the answers varied. Some of the respondents explained it was out of fear, others because of inconvenience. This was also a reason why some sex workers prefer to pay bribes instead of becoming arrested.

“But there is also another issue, they are not patient. A sex worker would rather pay a bribe of maybe 20 000-50 000 UGX than stay in a police cell for two days before being prepared for court. And also, they fear being taken to court, so sometimes they are left with no option other than paying that bribe ... So of the purpose to shortening the procedure, it’s easier to pay the bribe at the police station and have the file closed than going to court and you know, you have to report back until the case is dismissed. So to them it’s a shorter way of buying justice” Maria

Maria explains how the inconvenient system itself is a challenge for the sex workers and the paralegals. Some sex workers prefer to pay a bribe so they can be released instead of reporting back to court. They might also benefit financially on paying bribes than being detained for days and paying the transport to go back to court. For the sex workers that are mothers of small children, they might not see another way than paying the bribe. As the paralegals want to fight for legal justice, the inconvenient system and the sex workers needs threatens the process of justice.

CHAPTER EIGHT:

PEER SUPPORT IN SEX WORK ACTIVISM

In this chapter we will present the results of the interview that are focused in peer support and activism. There are four larger themes under this chapter that together form a deeper insight about peer mechanisms and ideologies behind the sex work activists in Kampala. “Social work within peer support” explains the peer support activities and mechanisms in the field of sex work, “Outcomes of activism” describes the changes that activism has achieved in Kampala. “Motivation to Activism” specifies the respondents’ reasons behind activism and “Challenges and dreams among the sex work activists” narrates the hopes and fears for the future of activism. The terms ‘peer supporter’, ‘peer helper’ and ‘peer educator’ are used synonymously. All respondents are peer educators and sex workers themselves, with a firm background of activism¹¹.

8.1 Social work within peer support

When looking at social work mechanisms in peer support we found out several examples that describe the activities and ways of peer education among the sex workers. This theme focuses on the methods of peer support that can be recognized from social work. The results of this chapter challenges the way of thinking ‘social work’ as something that is only done by social work professionals.

The themes we found are “professionalism”, “methods of peer support” and “safer sex work”, they all together form a picture of social work that is done by activists as peer support in the sex work community in Uganda.

Professionalism

The sex worker led organizations train peer supporters to the field in order to spread adequate information to the sex workers around Uganda. The activists are peer supporters themselves and they train other peers to continue sharing knowledge of safer sex work, rights and legal aid onwards. The participants describe the characteristics of a good peer supporter to be flexible, trustworthy, secretive, neutral, committed and be equipped with mobilization and communication skills. These can also be seen as characteristics of a good social worker.

“A peer supporter should be flexible, should be neutral no discrimination, and first of all you should have communication skills ... and they have to know two languages, at least English and Luganda but the most important thing when you are taught, you have to be flexible and you have to be neutral and you have to be available at any time that’s one thing I know ... it’s obvious you can see someone who is active in the community, you can’t ask anyone who is Kim and you fail to find me, everybody knows who Kim is because I am always there in bad times and good times who needs help anyone, who needs to go to hospital, who needs a referral, there are many other people and peer educators who are really there and people know them.” Kim

Amina emphasizes the importance of confidentiality in peer supporters:

“One quality of a good peer educator, one, you have to be a good listener, you have to be a good listener, so you have to be secretive, if you are told something by a member, then it has to remain with you even if it is to die with that secret you have to die with it, then another

¹¹ See appendix four for information about the informants

thing you have to have communication skills, another thing is about mobilization skills.”
Amina

The procedure of choosing the peer supporters is democratic in all the organizations that we met. The hot spots, which the informants refer to, are places where sexual services are provided, for example a specific street or area with many sex workers. The sex workers at the hot spots choose among themselves a peer that represents them as a peer supporter in the organizations. This model of decision-making can be seen as grass root democracy.

“Since we aren’t the ones choosing them [peer educators] I think the members [fellow sex workers] choose the ones they have confidence in, so for us our matter what we do, we come up and train the peer educator and some topics are the qualities of a good leader. So for us we just add. Because even if you have the skills, and people don’t trust you, people don’t believe in you, it doesn’t make any sense. ... when we go to the field, when we maybe we map out the hot spot, when we reach there we introduce ourselves, we tell them the vision and mission of WONETHA and after agreeing we tell them to choose among the group to choose their leader [the one to become a peer educator] and they give us one leader, we bring on board that peer educator, we train them on legal issues, on economic empowerment, we don’t have that capacity of training so many sex workers at once but what we know that when we train peer educators they will go back to their hot spot.” Olivia

Mapping the hot spots and doing systematic outreaches to understand the needs and dynamics of a particular area is an important and ongoing process for the activist in a big and constantly changing city like Kampala. Since the sex workers that these organizations target are often very vulnerable and poor and don’t have the means to commute to offices in other parts of Kampala, it is necessary to reach them in their everyday surroundings. This kind of mobilization is a professional sign of social work. The activists train peers both in their organizations offices and directly on hot spots. Each hot spots needs are looked into separately to see what kind of support is needed the most in the area, like Olivia explains in her next quote.

“We always tell the peer educators to mobilize them and they get a session like on the condom use, safe sex, negotiation skills with in the hot spots, we don’t only train here at the offices but we go deep up to their hot spots and we train members and so you get questions from different people and you see how you can start.” Olivia

Outreaches are long processes. It takes a lot of patience to keep going to the field and try to make a difference. Winning the trust of a stigmatized and marginalized group as sex workers demands time and effort. They follow up the people they meet, like Winnie and Stella describe.

“We keep on going back, we keep on giving the information to the colleagues that you convince her, we shall come back next time, so the next time we go back we see whether she has changed or not.” Winnie and Stella

The sex worker led organizations usually have their own members. Keeping track of the members is one sign of professionalism. A phone is an important tool in peer support in Kampala since people live far away from each other and the transportation is expensive and time consuming. Having a database on people on medicine is very advanced and professional way of support. Phone support can include reminding about medicine, health checks, and referrals to sex work friendly services or psycho-social support. Kim gives an example of peer support through telephone.

“I used to have a database of people who are on medication, I used to call them five minutes to the time to take the medicine to remind them, every day I used to call like 30 people to remind them, with phone calls it was easy, it's like everything happens on phone when referring people.” Kim

Counseling is a key part of social work practice. All the informants talk about the importance of peer to peer discussions. Sharing experiences, discussing and giving advice is seen as an important part of work for the activists. Activists acknowledge and emphasize that the discussions with fellow sex workers in their case is not professional counseling but more like peer to peer psycho-social support talks. Kim and Winnie and Stella describe support discussions in the following quotes:

“Yes, that's been working a lot [the discussions] we used to tell stories, then after I will advise, you talk to him, you counsel it's just like a friendly way it's not on a professional level.” Kim

“I could invite you to my place or you to invite me to your place and we talk about the issue. Most of the time when we are in the field, we be with the counselors or we come with professional counselors from Mulago hospital, MARPI, sometimes they are with us.” Winnie and Stella

Through the acknowledgement of their own boundaries the activists take on board professionals in order to provide support that they feel the target group is lacking. This is professional and advanced as such and will most likely benefit all in process through mutual learning. Winnie and Stella describe how they refer to professional counselors and about sharing ideas with them:

“It's good because we share ideas [with the counselors], and someone [sex worker] can ask you a question when you don't know how to answer so you can direct him or her to those counselors.” Winnie and Stella

Networking and multiprofessional cooperation has proved successful for the sex work activist field. In all the four interviews the importance of working together with different actors and organizations towards better conditions for sex workers is emphasized. The activists refer to dialogue meetings, trainings and workshops as a tool of networking. This has been especially powerful in the collaboration with the police, like discussed more in depth in the earlier chapter “Paralegal training”.

The activists work simultaneously with different actors in the community if problems arise. The idea is to get the sex workers voices heard and show the stories and faces behind the profession. That has, according to the interviews, decreased the amount of police violence and abuse. Kim tells that many officials have been positively surprised after learning more about sex workers and what they do besides sex work.

“We call in trainings like our trainings or workshops, and we tell them [officials] about our issues and what we are doing besides sex work, so for them they think we do only sex work, they don't know the other side of us what we do, we have been inviting them in high profile meetings and they get surprised.” Kim

Another way of professional working is the referral system in the organizations. Problems with health and law often demand professional help. This lowers the threshold of seeking help

especially for the most vulnerable ones. The activists use their network of sex work friendly services when referring peers in need, like in Aminas' organization.

"Another thing has been about the referral system, we have that health referral system in Lady Mermaids Bureau for instance. We have health service providers and we have [information] cards which are given to us with your name on them and the organization where you come from. Sometimes a sex worker can be sick, and what we do among us is to give a referral." Amina

In the interviews the respondents explain that it's important to know who is working where and when. Also the organizations that have clear peer group focus (gender/ sexual orientation based) specify their area of help in order to give more specialized support to sex workers. Amina clarifies how sex worker led organizations keep track on who works where in order to avoid double work on the field.

"We even do night outreaches and you can go to an area but we don't want to duplicate work so that's why within the sex work organizations we have in Uganda, we know that WONETHA is working here and here, for example, because we don't want to duplicate work." Amina

Methods of peer support

As an under theme of 'Social Work', "Methods of Peer Support" explains how the activists do social work in the field. In this chapter the informants talk about how they deliver peer support. Some of the ways of structural working are overlapping with the "professionalism" theme that is why in this theme the focus is more on direct peer to peer support.

One method of peer support is outreach, like we have mentioned earlier. Outreach itself is a day of delivering social work practice to the field. Outreach with marginalized groups is especially very important, even though sometimes challenging, like Amina describes in her next quote:

"As sex workers we always target where there are bars, where there are guest houses and places like clubs and where you can find most people. So when you go there you can find sex workers. That's when you introduce yourself and the work you do and your identity card. You ask them if they are sex workers or not. You introduce yourself, I am a sex worker like you. Sometimes it's not easy for [them] to trust .. sometimes they can see you on TV or something or sometimes they haven't heard about the organization but they are usually willing to listen. Slowly by slowly you can go further with the discussion and reach out to new topics, you create a bond of friendship. From there you talk about the organization and how they can benefit from your organization." Amina

The organizations have meetings where they share the latest information from the field. This allows the activists to get firsthand information about what is happening, what is new and pass on information to their peers. The meetings give support that helps the sex workers to cope if difficult situations. Kim gives an example on what kind of topics they discuss in their peer meetings:

"We used to have weekly meetings to support ourselves, we share stories, we advise about security issues, we share what's happening, how did you overcome this, stress management meetings and trainings, the need is about health." Kim

Peer meetings are an effective way to discuss, reflect and share ideas for peers. Sometimes the topics can be very tragic and talking with other sex workers can be useful. Winnie and Stella

think these group sessions are very important and sometimes it can be a good way to get more peers to join the organization, like they explain in their quote:

“The peer support is important because when we sit down, we share the experience ... like someone might be when she was raped, others might have got HIV but they don’t know where to go so when sit together, we may share ideas. We do mobilization and sensitization whereby we may gather together and we talk, others may feel interest so they can come to us directly and say that we are, or I have heard about it I want to know more about it, and so I would even like to join your group.” Winnie and Stella

Home visits is another method of working. Since sex workers still carry a stigma it is easier for some to meet a peer supporter at home when the meeting is more discreet. Sometimes the reason for a home visit can be that the sex worker is sick and in need of medical help. Many times the sex workers don’t have their families around or they are hiding their profession, which makes home visits a crucially important way of helping in a difficult life situation, like Amina explains in the next quote:

“One [method] has been home visits which has been so very important because some sex workers hide their profession. They can talk about health for instance if a sex worker is sick and sometimes we have the home care workers who can go, the caretakers who can go and visit the sex workers in their houses and find out exactly how they are. ... When they [sex workers] are arrested, then we can go to their houses, one of us can go there and take care of the house and sleep in the house until a sex worker has been released.” Amina

According to the interviews, as well as our own observations on the field, many sex workers have children and a large number of them are single mothers. Listening to the respondents it seems that child perspective is strong among the sex work community. Winnie and Stella give an example of how they supported an HIV positive single mother who got arrested:

“I had one of my friends, she was HIV positive, one day she was arrested and we went at the police station whereby she was refused to be given a bond and she had two kids, she had left them in her house so I had to go and take care of them, I brought them to my place whereby I had to give them food and shelter, she was taken to prison, she stayed there for two weeks, then I called HRAPF whereby HRAPF came in and helped her, she was still in bed and she came and she appreciated because I was taking care of her children and also I appreciated her but sadly she wasn’t taking her medicine whereby I had to go and take for her medicine in the prison, so it was good for me and for her, it was a success.” Winnie and Stella

If a sex worker wants to quit or look at other professional options besides sex work, there is possibility to join exit programs. This is something that the peer supporters also can advise with and refer to organizations that can be helpful. Amina says that there is respect and help for the ones that no longer want to continue selling sex or they want to learn a new profession:

“We respect the sex workers who want to be out of the sex work industry, we have rehabilitation organizations that we are working with. If a sex worker comes out and says that I no longer want to do sex work, we will respect that. ... Going for rehabilitation organizations doesn’t mean that you didn’t like what you were doing [sex work] but we have opportunities there. Because there are other jobs that can be given to a sex worker and even going there doesn’t mean I want your rehabilitation sessions for [quitting sex work]. Us we believe sex work is work.” Amina

Safer sex work

Safer sex work is a theme that includes the harm reduction aspect of sex work. We can consider safer sex work from health perspectives, that includes use and access to condoms and lubricants, sex work specific safety knowledge, adequate information about STI's and where to get help, care and support if needed. Safer sex work is also about working together with your colleagues to share experiences and good practices about sex work.

Condoms are the widely known to be the best way to protect oneself and your sexual partner from STI's and unwanted pregnancies. In the context of sex workers it is the most important tool at work. In Uganda the condoms are still rather expensive when bought from stores, especially for the poor. Many health clinics and organizations provide free condoms but for a sex worker the amount of free condoms is sometimes too little or the places where to access them too far to reach. Distribution of condoms is an important part of activists and peer supporters work. They take the condoms where the sex workers operate, distribute them to the workers, to lodges, guesthouses and brothels and even to sex work friendly bars. When doing bigger outreaches they even give out condoms directly to the clients of the sex workers. The sex workers are advised to always carry condoms, preferably a few extra in case you have a colleague who has run out of condoms, like Amina directs her peers:

"Before you even put transport money in your bag, you first put condoms and lubricants as well. Because a condom is a priority, because health is a priority to all of us. We go there and you find your friends [peers], maybe when they don't have condoms or something like that, then we can be sharing, that has been working." Amina

In the interviews it was clear that condom use is still a topic that needs attention. This is in order to emphasize the benefits of using a condom and guiding how a condom should be used in order to provide its full protection. The respondents also discussed that in the past some of the HIV positive sex workers were more careless about using a condom since they already had the infection. Raising awareness to protect oneself and the clients from STI's and unwanted pregnancies is utterly important. Winnie and Stella adds to the discussion of family planning aspect:

"What we focus on is the condom use, even if you are positive or negative, the focus is on condom use, just because they know that sex workers have a lot of children whereby they don't even know the fathers. They are single parents, most sex workers are single mothers and they don't know the real fathers of the kid so we focus on condom use and also we keep on reminding them use condom. ... We also had condom banks which were provided by reproductive health in every zone we had a condom bank, so every day you have to go in that condom bank and put in, because every day they used to come for them, they are not targeting sex workers but all community members." Winnie and Stella

Besides the condom banks, the protection is also distributed to drop in centers like Amina explains in her next quote. The sex worker led organizations try to spread the condoms so that they are easily available. Drop in centers can be also seen as a safe place if the sex worker needs urgent help.

"We have drop in centers, like safe houses of peer educators where our members can get condoms ... We get condoms from health facilities, then we distribute those condoms to the peers and sometimes even our outreach workers take condoms to the sex workers themselves but still we have drop in centers at our peer's houses. Because if there's an emergence for

instance, they can take those condoms, she can take condoms from her house and distribute them.“ Amina

Safety is crucial to sex workers. The stigma and the conditions and surroundings where sex work is done makes the profession dangerous. Peer support is an effective way to spread knowhow about staying safe when the peer knows the realities of the profession. Having practical information and advice about safer sex work can reduce the risk of violence and protect themselves and colleagues around. Working as a team and watching for others backs is a crucial practice of peer support in sex work, like Amina explains in her next quote:

“Sex workers have a right to say no to a client, sometimes we believe in our instincts ... sometimes men come and they are stinking when they have drunk and all that, many sort of things you can see and you really, and the heart can start beating fast, you have a right to say no. Security for our members is key, especially to our members who operate along the streets. If your friend is going with a client if it's a car make sure you write the number plates, if a client is taking you to a place make sure you tell your friend, this client is taking me to such and such a place, call me within an hour or I will call you within in an hour. If you call that person and when that person is not picking, then you can find ways to know where she is. Maybe something bad is happening. We were even thinking about pepper sprays for protection for the female sex workers, because we are women and we can't fight men. If we have a pepper spray even if there are two men you can use it for protection.” Amina

Like seen in this part “Social work within peer support” there are many indicators that tell us that the peer support done by the activists is social work. Sex work activists in Kampala can be seen as social work paraprofessionals that have developed their own support systems that are well organized and carefully planned.

8.2 Outcomes of activism

It is difficult to know how long sex work activism has been around in Kampala, but according to our respondents and the word on the field it is estimated to have been around for five to six years organization based. This chapter presents what kind out outcomes sex work activism has brought to sex workers in Kampala. The chapter is divided to two parts, firstly we talk about outcomes that are linked to “Social Change” and there after “Empowerment as an outcome of activism”.

Social change

According to the interviews activism and peer support within the sex work movement has brought social change in a wider perspective. The social change that the respondents refer to is linked with different levels of the field, from the everyday life of sex workers to advocacy and awareness level. The community around the sex workers has improved drastically. Social change has brought safer working conditions to sex workers. The importance of including the local leaders, police and priests in the dialogues with sex workers is more discussed in the ‘Paralegal training’ chapter, but since it has brought social change also from the peer support perspective it is mentioned here once more.

Social change can be seen in the atmosphere in the community. Behavioral change within the sex workers came up frequently in the interviews. It is described as changes in how sex workers behave towards the surrounding community where they live and operate as well as

improved communication between their colleagues. Taking more responsibility of one's own behavior is an important outcome of activism and peer-support that has decreased discrimination in the communities. Sex workers are seen in a more positive light, like Kim explains in her next quote:

“People have changed socially, hygienically, that’s important, people used not to bath so but now people have really changed a lot, on their social behaviors, they talk to people, the way we [sex workers] talk to clients, a lot has changed socially, and nowadays you can see that the community now respects some of us it’s because of the way we behave in the community”
Kim

The change in taking care of health has been one of the most influential outcomes of the activism within sex workers in Kampala. Sex workers are more aware of the importance of safer sex than before the activists started their peer support activities. Staying safe and taking care of your health is an investment in the future. Olivia says the difference is in how the sex worker looks at the future:

“We say that you have to get negotiate for the safer sex. When I started sex work, a client could come and give you a lot of money for unprotected sex. It’s up to the sex worker: Am I working just for today or I am working for tomorrow too? So if you are working just for today, you just give in. But if you know that tomorrow I want to be alive and healthy, that means I should protect myself and use a condom.” Olivia

Empowerment as an outcome of activism

Empowerment is one of the most important outcomes of the sex work activism in Kampala. All the informants talk about empowerment. The sex workers have become more aware of their rights and how to claim them in practice. In the interviews the participants describe that the self-esteem of many sex workers has increased through peer support mechanisms. Amina describes in her quote how skills and expertise have made an impact for the sex workers. As an empowered sex worker it is easier to claim rights also when it comes to violations:

“We [sex workers] have skills, we have the expertise, we have the experience, we go to the police.” Amina

The interest in capacity building among the sex work activists has increased. The activists have now better opportunities to improve their skills and leadership through trainings that are organized by different organizations and institutions. The activists are also joining universities and colleges which has made a positive impact in the sex work movement, like Amina describes in her next quote.

“Because through the civil society we have been having opportunities as sex work leaders, opportunities of learning and we have opportunities to be in leadership trainings which have really built our capacities as I have told you, we are just joining universities and colleges now because some of us are school drop outs. That has really helped us.” Amina

The sex work activists are a driving force to increase empowerment within the sex work community. In the interviews it was clear that the activist themselves felt more empowered and wanted to support and encourage other sex workers towards empowerment. Amina wants to be an advocate for the voiceless sex workers and try to make an impact on different levels in the society. This quote describes the passion and determination of the sex work activists,

the power of empowerment. All respondents expressed their dedication towards advocating for the fellow sex workers.

“I want to be an icon for the voiceless, I want to speak for those who can’t speak for themselves. But concerning health issues, concerning sex workers, as an activist I want to join other sex work activist so that we can advocate, at national level, at regional level, international level about the health needs, about how sex workers can be treated ... and that is why I wake up every day, in the morning is to advocate for the national health needs of sex workers.” Amina

Economic empowerment is one of the methods of activism but is also an outcome of the capacity building within sex workers. Saving skills, extra-work and economic planning is not only affecting the sex workers but also their families. Through economic empowerment the sex workers can add to their earnings and develop skills that can help out financially when a sex worker retires from sex work. The sex work activists and their organizations help peers to be more responsible with money, Kim gives an example how she and her community have created a saving circle.

“So this economic empowerment will empower us economically yes we are doing sex work but it will even add on our earnings and even our savings. We also have a saving circle in the community, like we get a group of other ten people, we save like 1,000 everyday so that one changes people’s attitudes towards you, we call them circles so if we are ten we save 1,000 everyday each of you at the end of the week someone gets that’s money, every week we give it to someone.” Kim

Even sex work is a profession as itself, it is seen useful to have extra ways of earning on the side. This will add financial security in case of sickness, a plan for the retirement days and back-up system for the times when sex work doesn’t bring enough income. Through saving and ways of getting money from other sources of work the sex worker is more empowered to choose safe clients and minimize the temptation to make risky decisions in order to make more money. Risky decisions could include having unprotected sex, take clients that you are not comfortable working with or break your own sexual boundaries in need of money. Kim gives an example of economic empowerment:

“The economic empowerment it’s because we know we shall grow old, we are sick sometimes if you are weak you can do something small with the economic empowerment. You practice something in your head, something very simple and just buy the material and do your jewelry, so this will help people to save money and to work their years of retirement to just work from home and even before that the next this thing it will reduce on death rate of sex transgender people because you won’t be going to streets to work every day...” Kim

Increased awareness within the sex work community

According to the interviews, awareness has increased in all parties of sex work due to activism. The participants describe that awareness in health, safer sex work and legal- and human rights has improved within the sex workers as well within other networks and communities that they co-operate with. All informants point out increased awareness as an outcome of activism. Simplified example could be that sex work activists gather sex workers from different areas and hotspots, train them and they spread the information on the communities where they operate. Amina gives an example of how raising awareness in practice can look like.

“We [sex work activists] make sure that we get sex workers from different places, once they come to those dialogues or trainings to acquire knowledge, we make sure that after the knowledge you have acquired you go back to those communities and, you share the information you share the knowledge, you share the skills, you share the experiences to other sex workers so that they can also benefit that one has also been working.” Amina

Legal awareness is crucial when it comes to sex work in a country where it is criminalized and corruption rates are high. The respondents talk about the importance of providing up to date information about legislation and human rights to their peer sex workers. The paralegals provide up to date information about laws that concern sex workers on their outreaches and trainings. More detailed information about paralegals can be read from the paralegal chapter in this thesis.

The advocacy work done by the sex work activists has made a great impact for the sex workers in Uganda. Media and research are influential arenas in raising awareness about sex workers and their rights in Uganda as well as on a global scale. Like in the “Paralegal training” chapter, media can be very harmful to sex workers but it’s important to remember that it can also be a channel to promote sex workers rights. Cooperation with journalists and researchers is needed in order to raise awareness and get publicity to the sex work movement, like Amina describes in her interview:

“It has really worked so well like if we are challenging laws, and policies that is done at national level and it’s done by all of us ... the advocacy we have been doing in Uganda as sex workers, it has really brought many people on board like, researchers, like journalists, which is working because we have the visibility as sex workers. If we meet such people we give them the right information about sex work in Uganda, they can go there publishing, then that can be a very big help to many people and I think it can bring a meaning. You never know, it can bring a lot of meaning and opportunities for sex workers in Uganda.” Amina

Under the theme “Outcomes of activism” the results indicate that there is a significant improvement in the wellbeing of sex workers in Kampala, which has led to empowerment, increased awareness and social change through activism. Systematic working towards change in different levels of activism is proven to be effective in the sex work community.

8.3 Motivation to activism

When studying sex work activism in Kampala it is interesting to find out the motivation behind the activism. In our semi-structured interviews one of the aims was to find out what drives people to strive for social change, sometimes compromising their own wellbeing in the process. We named the two sub themes under motivation to activism to “Needs behind the rising action” and “Reasons behind sex work activism”.

Needs behind the rising action

In this theme the informants talk about the actual needs of sex workers that the activism is trying to respond to. In this chapter we will try to address the central needs of sex workers in Kampala. Many of the sex workers needs in Kampala are practical issues that concern health and access to accurate information about safer sex work. This is especially crucial since in Uganda the most vulnerable sex workers lack access to internet or literature about sexual health. Illiteracy is also a major threat to getting information about ways to stay safe when working within sex industry. HIV/STI prevention and proper condom use is a practical need

in the field, also the sex work friendly treatment to those infections is also a right and a demand for the sex workers.

Two of the informants also discussed the importance of protecting the client from getting infected and saw it as a part of professional responsibility. Amina is explaining about the importance of adequate information about condom use and HIV as well as the responsibility to protect the clients from sexually transmitted infections.

“Sex workers have been lacking information, health information, legal, and human rights information that is something that sex workers didn’t have. Sex workers didn’t know that they should protect themselves even if already HIV positive. They can even get other HIV through unprotected sex, they can get STIs and even many transmitted diseases, they didn’t have that information. It’s a right of a sex worker to protect a client and they didn’t have that information.” Amina

The access to condoms for the most vulnerable sex workers is a constant need since the condoms are expensive considering the sex workers income level. Three of the four informants mentioned lubricants as a practical need, since they are more difficult to get hold of. Olivia points out that lubricants are important when fighting HIV, especially for sex workers:

“What is lacking are the lubricants because lubricants are one of the HIV prevention methods as you know these days women are dry what, and as a sex worker when you take very many men you become dry of course, so lubricants is a very big challenge in Uganda we don’t have them.” Olivia

Medication and sex work friendly services are a clear need in Uganda, especially in the rural areas in Uganda. By sex work friendly services we refer to services that are aimed at sex workers and that they have knowhow about sex worker’s needs. Our respondents are all based in Kampala but they share a common worry about their peers in rural areas. Awareness about rights and safer sex work is mentioned to be one of the most urgent needs, especially for rural sex workers. Amina explains the basic needs of sex workers in Uganda:

“One of the needs of our peers was medication, we were discriminated and stigmatized in many health centers, so one of the needs, health friendly services, information, health information and legal information to know sex work is illegal in Uganda but what are those acts , what are those laws and how best can we challenge them.” Amina

Skills training is one need that comes up frequently in the interviews. The skills that the informants mention are the ones that support safer sex work in one way or another. Two informants mentioned English language as an important skill to Ugandan sex workers since it improves the safety of working when you can negotiate prices and services with clients who don’t speak the same language as the sex worker. This also gives more opportunities to take foreign clients, who tend to pay better. Olivia describes why language skills are important to sex workers:

“It’s like us sex workers we welcome all different kinds [of clients] and with different languages so that’s why we say that they have to learn English because they know the local language most of them [the sex workers] ... you may get a mzungu, a white man and how are you going to talk to him, you may get somebody from another country, but what brings us together is English. How to negotiate for safe sex in English is important for your safety.” Olivia

Reasons behind activism

The reasons that motivate to action are a striving force in the continuance of activism on a personal level. In this chapter we look into reasons behind activism and how the sex work activists feel about their work with peer support. 'Reasons behind activism' is an important theme in the interviews, it brings light to the motivation to become an activist.

Feeling of passion and solidarity towards other sex workers rights was visible in all interviews. The respondents had different examples of deep empathy that was a force that directed them to activism and peer support. Here is an example from Kim, who is ready to fight for the rights of sex workers in the risk of her own life.

"Yes, I will try and I will stay, I am doing it with passion, I love what I am doing, I hate to see people suffering and I hate to see people dying, so I will fight until my last breath and I will train other people." Kim

In addition to the passion for rights of the sex workers, the lack of social network is often one reason that makes people arrange themselves tightly to the sex work activist field. Many have to leave their families when their sexual orientation or gender identity comes out or if the families don't approve sex work. Some have lost their families for other reasons. In our study this is something that comes up frequently. Kim sees the activist community as her family.

"It is much, much, needed [sex work community] because you know some of us don't have families, we don't have original families so when we come together this is the family we have, the other trans people are related to other sex workers, so peer support is needed because it is easy to talk to someone of your age, someone you trust." Kim

The feeling of togetherness and support is important for the respondents. The bond between the sex workers in Kampala seems to be strong in the areas where the peer support activities take place. Amina describes the bond in the next quote:

"I think one, it creates a bond of relationship within the sex workers, it really creates a bond of friendship that we can help one another, another thing, it brings out awareness because for instance, if I have got a problem, maybe I was raped, maybe I was what and a sex worker comes to me and assists me to take the case to the police and all that." Amina

Even though the overall situation for sex workers in Kampala has improved during the last years there is still a strong stigma towards the sex workers. Fighting stigma is named as a reason behind sex work activism in all the interviews. Stigma is described to have a negative impact in all areas of life of the sex workers. Fighting stigma is also seen as a way to lower threshold to access services. Olivia explains why it's important that healthcare professionals are equipped with adequate information about sex workers as a client group.

"We bring the local leaders lawyers and they can understand who is a sex worker, how people are engaging into sex work and how we can cooperate. You know there's a lot of stigma in our work, and we have the health department where we bring up the health providers also we do the same we sensitize, they tell us how we feel when they may be stigmatized in the hospitals, why we are not responding well in the health facilities and they come to know this because there are people who don't know who the sex worker is, they have bad attitudes on us, so we come together and see sex workers are there, all sex workers are involved in such thing, even if they aren't peer educators, they are involved so that we can reduce on the stigma." Olivia

The organizations are specialized in their own peer activities in practice even the different groups and organizations work closely together with each other. Reason behind activism in

this perspective can be defending the rights of not only other sex work colleagues but also support the sub group of sex workers with a similar gender/sexual orientation background. This specialized peer knowhow is seen to reach the target groups better. This is also discussed in the ‘Mapping’ section of this thesis. The next quote is one example how this process can look like:

“Before we used to be in other organizations and we were peer educators but we saw that our needs as trans women living with HIV were not really catered so it’s me and Johanna, we decided to come up with a club like HIV club but after we saw there’s a lot of need we decided to make it an organization. There was a lot of need for transgender and sex worker so we decided to concentrate on that.” Kim

A famous activist slogan “Rights not Rescue” describes how sex workers want rights and equality instead of being rescued from sex work. Professional social work should focus on the needs that the sex workers themselves express instead of putting most of their energy in finding ways for people to exit sex work. Harm-reduction and low-threshold services have been powerful mechanisms of social work that the activists are using to answer the needs of the sex work community. Social work should try to address those needs and strive for the rights of the sex workers. Social workers should work together with the paraprofessionals in order to reach effective results of social change in the future.

8.4 Challenges and dreams among the sex work activists

The sex work community in Uganda is strong and lively, but the challenges are still many in a country where sex work is illegal and stigmatized. Many of the themes that rise from the interviews are similar concerns about peer support but also similar dreams of how the future could look like. This chapter is divided into two themes, “Challenges in peer support” and “Future hopes and dreams of activism”

Challenges in peer support

The greatest concern among all informants was the wellbeing of rural sex workers. It was a theme that came up in all the interviews and was usually combined with the explanation that the money for peer support is not enough to reach the most vulnerable areas in Uganda. The situation is worrying from several aspects, as Kim explains in her next quote. She points out that the HIV prevalence is higher in the rural areas where access to condoms and PEP and knowledge about HIV is limited or nonexistent. If a person doesn’t know one’s HIV status or is HIV positive but lacking medication, the person is at risk of spreading the virus further accidentally.

“It’s very bad, that is why there is high rate of HIV in rural areas, because they don’t have knowledge to HIV they don’t use condoms, they don’t know PEP, I mean they lack preventive even when those that are positive they are not on medication.” Kim

Olivia also talks about the great challenge to reach the sex workers outside Kampala. Funds are crucial in order to reach other areas in Uganda and provide basic health services and other peer support to sex workers. With more funds the sex workers believe they can organize themselves widely to different districts in Uganda.

“Actually we [WONETHA] need more funds like so far we are in only two districts but if we can get more funds, we extend our districts because what I know, the country is full of sex

workers and we aren't reaching them, we haven't reached even quarter of sex workers in Uganda because of funds but if we can get some funds we can reach everywhere." Olivia

The peer educators need to be provided with money for example to transportation and airtime, and limited funds jeopardizes providing support and aid when needed. Money is not the main reason for doing peer support but it can work as a motivation for the peer helpers.

"The challenge is about maintaining a peer educator with airtime [phone money]. Sometimes they don't have the airtime to call us, or money to take their fellow sex workers to the hospital. We need more funds so that we can support our peers very well and we can motivate their work." Olivia

Funds are also needed when it comes to training sessions. One challenge is that the sex work activists would want to be more educated about human rights and social justice, but that requires experts that usually come with a price tag the organizations can't afford. Even though HRAPF is working with creating legal awareness, Amina still sees a need for further training in human rights among sex workers. International funding could be a way to get the right kind of people to train them human rights.

"No, because we don't have such [human rights] trainings we used to have them they need experts whereby experts are expensive to hire them to facilitate and we don't have such funding but with global funding, they have been funding us, people can train us to know human rights" Amina

Most of the organizations that provide peer support in Kampala are targeting the vulnerable sex workers in the city. More privileged sex workers are often out of reach, or are not in the need of the same services as the others. It is seen as a challenge that the sex work community has a sub-group that is difficult to approach. Some sex workers don't always identify themselves as sex workers but they exchange sexual services for money or other goods. These harder to reach sex workers are discussed earlier in the background chapter. Winnie and Stella tell about how difficult it sometimes is to approach this sub-group.

"Those ones in the bars, at times they think that we are going to arrest them, all the time they are taking alcohol so they are rude at times, they abuse, we get hard time to convince them, and most of the time, they may think that they aren't sex workers because they are not on street." Winnie and Stella

Security is a constant challenge for the sex workers. Even there has been big improvements done security wise by networking with the authorities and local leaders the profession is still not safe in Uganda. Amina explains that the state claims to work with sex workers even they don't do so and the environment is unfriendly for sex work:

"[The state] Claim to work with us, yet not working with us, then we have unfriendly environments we still have challenges, I mean we, the sex work activists, we don't have enough security." Amina

Most of the sex work activists we met while doing our study were not very highly educated from the start but had continued studying, or had a dream to study further in order to be able to be a more serious actor in the field of politics and decision making. This however is also a financial question in Uganda, where higher education is expensive for an average Ugandan. The activists in the interviews have dreams to continue developing their skills in schools and

trainings in the interest of activism. Amina refers to education as a solution for increasing the respect for the sex work activists in the different networks and organizations.

"I think also education for sex workers is a challenge because for us here we are still struggling as sex workers to get scholarship to pay for our school fees, we will never reason with people out there, that is still a big challenge, sex workers need to go to school, sex work activist, we really need to go back to school. ... You can't work in these organizations, for instance you don't know how to use a computer then how are you going to send those documents if you don't how to use a computer, how do you go to those high level places."
Amina

Olivia explains how frustrating it can be in situations when she can't challenge an opinion even she has personal experience about issue in question. She also mentions education as a key to be a good activist and leader within sex work.

"I can't talk about legal [issues] sometimes when you want to challenge something that something you really know, you have an experience of it, but if you are not educated you will not be heard, if you are not educated you will never go further, you can be a good leader but education is the key" Olivia

Future hopes and dreams of activism

When it comes to future dreams of activism the themes are very similar in the interviews. A community free of stigma and discrimination is an overall goal and hope for the future for the sex worker activists. The dream is to have the sex work profession recognized and protected and to have sex work friendly services that are easy to access even to the vulnerable sex workers. Amina explains this in her next quote.

"[We should] increase reach out and in future we want to see sex workers' communities that they are protected, recognized ... where sex workers can get health friendly services, where peer educators can be working with the community local council, where sex work peers can work with the local community, work hand in hand without stigma and discrimination. Because sometimes we can have those communities where local council chairmen are very sex work phobic and that is when our peers can't work well in a such communities. We want a free community where sex work can be practiced without stigma and discrimination." Amina

Reaching all hot spots in Uganda is Olivia's dream. She also underlines the importance of accessible services and legal aid for all sex workers in Uganda. Increasing the amount of peer educators would be crucial to make the dream come true.

"[Dream] Is to reach all the spots in Uganda such that today we [WONETHA] have 26 peer educators but my dream is to like to get 100 and 100 peer educators because we are very many and to see that all sex workers in Uganda at least get the services in a friendly way like the facilities, the legal departments and they are empowered to stand in and say this is this and no is no." Olivia

The children of the sex workers is one worry among the activist. HIV-positive sex workers Winnie and Stella discuss the dream of having a better future for the children of sex workers, especially for those whose parents are HIV-positive. Through putting children in schools they have more opportunities to choose from in the future. When HIV-positive sex workers with children have another income besides sex work they can financially support their family in a

more stable way. Entrepreneurship may generate extra income that benefits the welfare of the children.

“If we would have the resources we could be putting all children to schools, so that we could maybe train the sex workers so that they would also train their young ones to grow up not being sex workers. Because I am a sex worker, I don’t want my child also to be a sex worker. And for them [HIV positive sex workers] to be given entrepreneurship so that they can get another side income generating would be good. For us we are working with people who are HIV positive, sometimes they may wake up early in the morning and be sick, the sex worker has children to take care of. So she may not have money to take care of those children and in the end of the day she turns on us, whereby we [the organization] have to take care for her and her kids. Having another income generating in these situations would have done them so much good.” Winnie and Stella

Amina has a dream to see the sex work activist movement grow and get more professional. Most of the sex worker led organizations work with low to zero budgets and that is seen in the interviews very clearly as a waste of knowhow, then there are capable people with strategies and methods to work with but no money to do it with. Amina hopes that people could earn a salary for the peer work and advocacy that they do now for free. By a wider recognition of the activists peer work they hope there could be funds for it in the future.

“I want us to have an office with more members, we want people to earn salary” Amina

When being asked about hopes and dreams of activism, Kim focuses in sexual equality and transgender questions. After all, equality is the main goal for sex work activists in Uganda.

“My dreams first of all are like, recognition of transgender people, equality for marriage, change of names, change of sex, and being equal in each and everything.” Kim

A dream for many of the sex work activists is that they get their voices heard and that they are included in the forums where decisions that concern sex workers are made. There is frustration in the interviews whenever there is talk about cooperation with the government. The government is not consulting the sex workers in issues that concern them or that they could be great help with. Sex workers are a part of the solution in the battle against HIV in Uganda. Amina explains her hope to work with the government in order to fight against HIV and help to reach the zero new infections goal of Uganda. (Uganda AIDS commission, 2011).

“Where we can talk about all issues of sex workers, in those big forums so that people can know the use of sex workers and why are we so mad is about what our government to start planning for us, they don’t know anything about us, they will never know our needs unless they come and work with us, that’s why we say: Nothing about us without us. If they want to know the needs when they are talking about zero infections, they will never reach to those zero infections if they don’t want to work with us. ... We [sex workers] are a problem, they think, but we are a solution. We need to invite them to fight against HIV in Uganda, they have to work with us, if they really want to achieve the goals of the zero infections, they have to come and work with us.” Amina

In the theme “Challenges and dreams among sex work activists” the activists shared their dreams about the future of the sex work community in Kampala. Dreams and visions are important for the activists because they will play a crucial part in defining the direction of the

movement. Inclusion of all sex workers is considered as a priority, especially for those who are in the very margins of the society in the rural areas. From a social work viewpoint the child perspective is utterly important. This is where the professional social work should give its full support to the sex workers and together carry out sex work friendly solutions to those children.

CHAPTER NINE: ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Our reflections and analyses will be divided into six parts. We have linked them into our four result-parts and divided the analyses the same way. We have chosen to look at the sex work activism through a feminist perspective in its own part and we link the results we have found to our main-questions in the final part.

9.1 Social work and activism

Activism, paralegal training and peer support can easily be recognized as social work. Since we came to gather the data in Kampala without a picture of how the activism scene would look like, we were pleased to see how well organized and highly developed work was done by the activists and their organizations. Our hypothesis was that the grass root work might be active and alive, but the measures of it exceeded our expectations. The activists work in all the levels of social work, raising awareness, support in individual, group and community level, broad multi professional networking and political activity, all this in a country where sex work is illegal.

Payne (2002) explains how critical social work focuses on the structural level with the aim of social change, which is similar to the way the sex worker led organizations work together with other organizations. They work towards the same goal, to decrease and highlight injustice among a marginalized group, which is one of the key parts of critical social work. The knowhow and expertise does make one wonder the definition of social work itself. None of the sex workers we met during the research were educated as social workers. Still the services that the sex worker led organizations provide could be textbook examples of outreach, social change and client work to name a few. Where is the line between social work and activism in this form and context? Spitzer et al. (2014, p.vii) state that the importance of paraprofessionals should be better acknowledged in East Africa. Professionalization of social work might neglect these grass root workers who are without an academic background. Working more closely to paraprofessionals, like sex work activist in this case, can help to achieve many goals of social work (Spitzer et al., 2014).

According to the concept of empowerment, a social worker cannot empower a client but can only give the tools for the client (Mullaly, 1997). This can easily be compared to the services the organizations deliver. Through trainings and awareness sessions, the sex workers themselves get the tools and the knowledge needed to fight the oppression themselves. Empowerment is a way of working, and it is clear that the interventions we witnessed among the organizations were connected to empowerment theories. Teaching the sex workers about their rights provides them with the competence they need to look critically at the oppressed system they are a part of. Empowerment is as much of a process as a goal (Mullaly, 1997). In this case, it is a process about teaching the sex workers to defend themselves, but also to recognize the injustice and the flaws in the Ugandan system. The sex workers we met that were not a part of any organizations had other ways of coping. Either they had a better financial security, or they used informal networks to support each other. Even though this is helpful to the sex workers who are outside the sex work movement, it doesn't create a social change in the broader picture.

In order to create a positive change for sex workers, it is important to include them in the projects concerning them, something that was discovered in the Sonagachi project as well

(Pardasani, 2004). Looking at our results, one can clearly see that cooperation with other actors benefits the sex workers, and the activists are very aware of their own strengths and limitations. The activists know their needs better than anyone, and the fact that they have such a close co-operation with sex worker friendly organizations with different expertise they can define what kind of help they need. It is beneficial to the sex workers to have a multiprofessional support network and in order to make the most of it, the sex workers themselves need to be included in designing the projects that concern them together with the experts.

To have partners with expert-knowledge also gives the sex workers more credibility in the debate. One example of how cooperation can help them is the example of working towards decriminalization. Dominelli (2002) argues that when it comes to anti-oppressive practice the focus should be on looking at the structures of oppression, which is what HRAPF and other sex work friendly organizations do when it comes to challenging the laws. As discussed earlier, laws can often be linked to norms in the society and in that sense, the work the sex work activists do together with sex work friendly organizations is also about challenging the norms within the society. Healy (2005) mentions that one has to look at all the different parts in the society that are oppressive and by challenging the laws, they also challenge the norms and see the structures as a part of the problem. Once again, we can see similarities with the Sonagachi project; through close co-operation they could challenge police harassments and brothels that didn't benefit the society they tried to create.

The professionalism theme comes out clearly in all of the result parts. The different organizations provide different kind of support. They do not try to compete with each other, but rather complement different needs within the sex work community. The division of work between the activists and their organizations is impressive and crucial in order to be effective and professional. The respondents describe grass root democracy in the movement but also recognize their own limitations. That benefits the most vulnerable sex workers and gives them a voice and power to influence on decisions that are made in the sex worker led organizations.

9.2 Social change

We can examine the outcomes of activism in different levels. Starting from a personal level, our research shows that the welfare and safety especially for the vulnerable sex workers has increased. In the areas where sex work activists operate there is more adequate information available about safer sex work and legal and human rights. This lowers the threshold for sex workers to turn to the police if their rights have been violated or if they are abused in other ways.

Measuring social change is a challenge. We will look at the opinions that come from the respondents and the observations that we have made in the field and in combination form an analysis of what kind of social impact the activism has achieved. Mathieu (2003) explains that one of the reasons sex work activists sometimes have a hard time creating a social movement is because there has to be a big number of sex workers uniting and include strong leaders. The movement we came across in Kampala did not have these weaknesses and maybe that is one of the keys to success. Another reason why the movement has been so successful is the combination of different interventions. As Cornish and Campbell (2009) mentions, peer support itself is often not enough to create a positive change. One has to involve stakeholders but also have a holistic picture, addressing more than only one problem. Through our interviews and observations it became clear that the work the activists do together with sex

work friendly organizations have created social changes, awareness and empowerment with the knowledge they spread.

Our informants gave us a picture of how they now were more able to value themselves. The networks and trainings had empowered our informants to dare to claim respect and demand their rights. This cannot be done if the sex workers victimize themselves and question their own worthiness. As discussed in earlier research concerning stigma, Bandyopadhyay et al. (2006) defines one of the main struggles is the stigma and social norms. These can only be challenged if the sex workers can see their worth and demand rights. Knowing legal and human rights made our informants put their problems on a more structural level. Grasping the idea that individual problems are linked to a bigger, more structural oppression takes away the individual guilt, which is something Mullaly (1997) emphasizes. As mentioned by Pardasani (2004) and Newman (2003), looking at the structural oppression and recognize the power structures is needed when working with marginalized groups (Ibid.).

Since the sex work activism movement that we researched in Kampala is fairly young, around six years, we consider the outcomes to be short-term. Long term effects will be visible later. Therefore we found the timing to study sex work activism in Kampala in 2015 ideal. The field needs to get its work visible and most of all, the effects valued. The awareness they have created in their different activities has challenged the stigma. The activists are politically active, trying to challenge the laws that are oppressing the sex workers in Uganda. During the interviews and observations, we witnessed how the sex work movement is active in trying to impact the structural level oppression. This is needed among sex workers and especially among the most vulnerable ones who have a double stigma of being in a sexual or gender minority or HIV positive.

One good example of how the sex work activists work on a structural level is the fight against corruption. To become aware of what the corrupted system does and how it in the end can be a disadvantage to pay bribes, can closely be linked to both anti-oppressive practice and empowerment. To understand how the corruption is a structural problem that affects them negatively, and that they together can challenge the system makes them become actors against corruption instead of victims of it. With this knowledge, they are now more motivated to work against corruption and they can be more aware of how their choices can affect them and their community. The respondents explained how they are now more aware and work actively against corruption. When the sex workers used to pay the bribes they did not see it as an active choice that had consequences. Many of the respondents explained that the fear of the police made them pay, which cannot be seen as an active choice. The fight against corruption can be linked to how Mullaly (1997) explained empowerment, the client needs to understand the connection between the individual problems and the structural oppression. This will create social change, it has already empowered the sex workers, and hopefully, the awareness will continue to rise.

9.3 Motivation

The results of motivation to activism were divided into “Needs” and “Reasons” behind activism. We will start by looking at the needs of sex work activism that are interlinked with the needs of sex workers in Kampala in this case.

The needs that came up in our results were very clear; access to health care and accurate safer sex work information, sex work friendly services, STI prevention and treatment and skills training were agreed to be the main practical needs of sex workers in Kampala. The information sharing that both paralegals and peer-supporters do is a part of their grass root level work, and can be seen as help to self-help, which Mullaly (1997) mentions as a part of empowerment. In order to create a safe environment, sex workers need to work together. In the results it was also mentioned how vulnerable sex workers were entering sex work and how crucial information sharing is. Needs and reasons together form motivation. When the needs are not met by the society and social and health services nor addressed through politics, activism is a powerful tool to protect the rights of sex workers. Activism within the sex work movement should show direction to the clinical social workers in Uganda, and hopefully through getting the voices heard, it will inspire to social change in a greater aspect.

The needs here are actually rights that are violated, and that has evoked the reason behind activism that is multidimensional oppression against sex workers. Healy (2005) explains that working in an anti-oppressive way one has to recognize the different parts in the society that are oppressing and work against those structures. The examples from our results, with different interventions, outreaches and sex work friendly organizations, are certainly anti-oppressive work. An example of a need is access to health care. Since sex workers are a stigmatized group they are often discriminated by their surroundings and they also suffer from oppression. Health care facilities and legal aid are there, but because of the stigma and discrimination they can't use services the same way as the non-oppressed. Working in an anti-oppressive way the activists and their sex worker led organizations have managed to build bridges with organizations that have become specialized in the needs of sex workers.

Combining anti-oppressive ways of developing programs that are designed for educating sex workers with free and easy to access, we get low threshold skills training. The activists and their sex worker led organizations have established such programs in Kampala with success. Skills training is a way of empowerment, also a term familiar from social work. When equipped with adequate knowledge and skills sex workers are empowered to have more control over their lives. As mentioned in earlier research, to have effective empowerment programs for sex workers, the sex workers have to be included in the process (Bandyopadhyay et al., 2006), which is clearly the case in Kampala. For some, interventions might be a step out of sex work and for others a way of working more safely and in a more professional manner.

Another example could be a need for education and access to information that is also named as a need for sex workers in our interviews. If we start by analyzing that sex workers often have less opportunities to education because of economic vulnerability. As an oppressed group the access to adequate information is often limited, due to lack of internet access, lack of educational opportunities or even illiteracy. None of our respondents had learned about human rights or legal rights in school. This is a flaw in the school system, as we see it. It makes Ugandans easy victims for abuse and oppression by the state in general.

We also think that the low education level concerning human and legal rights in Uganda can be a problem in the bigger picture. It doesn't matter how well the sex workers know the laws or their rights, if they are not recognized. As mentioned in our results chapter, there is also ignorance among the public, which puts sex workers in danger. It is not only the sex workers who have not been taught the legal system in school. It is not only sex workers that need empowerment and knowledge about their rights; it is an issue for the whole country and

especially for the marginalized groups. If the level of knowledge of constitutional rights is increased in the country, legal abuse might decline. Otherwise, legal and structural oppression can continue as it has so far. The constitution has to be implemented, human rights respected; otherwise it is just a pile of meaningless documents. Not only will we question the implementation of the human rights documents they have ratified, or the constitution of Uganda, during the research we also ended up questioning the laws. The Ugandan laws and the lack of implementation of the sex workers rights is a part of a structural oppression. Fook (2002) highlights that social workers have to be aware that individual problems are a part of structural problems and the control mechanisms that are in the structures. The problem in the individual level is the sex workers struggle for their rights, and the structural problem is not only the laws, but the non-implementation of their rights. Who controls these structures? Who makes the rules? Most of the sex workers don't harm the society, and it is therefore worth questioning the laws that oppresses the sex workers.

9.4 Challenges

Even though the sex work activists have improved the reality for their peers, they still face a lot of challenges on both personal and structural level. If we start to look at the personal challenges, we met many female sex workers who found it hard to support their children. The children of sex workers often carry the parents' stigma of sex work and can be discriminated because of it. There is a need of outside support in order for their children to have equal opportunities in life. Attitude change towards sex workers children is not enough, but we saw a need of concrete multi professional support. The Sonagachi-project (Pardasani, 2004, Basu and Dutta, 2008) chapter could be used in designing services and projects that are aimed to sex workers children. The child perspective should be a strong focus when it comes to social work practice with sex workers in Uganda. Having a night time nursery can be seen as harm-reduction and would increase the safety of sex workers children, especially because many sex workers lack social support from the extended family. But for the government to support such an establishment, the laws have to be changed.

Another challenge that was mentioned by our respondents was the double stigma that the LGBTI sex workers face. Even with professional support, they still hesitate to go to the police and report abuse. Even with the understanding about different parts in the structure that oppress them, both culturally and legally, they are not enjoying their rights. The question is, how can LGBTI sex workers be empowered when all the structures are working against them? As Newman (2003) mentions, one of the aim with fighting stigma is legal and social recognition. When it comes to the LGBTI sex workers rights, empowerment is an important tool. Mullaly (1997) mentions that by becoming aware and understand the parts in the system that are oppressing is important in the empowerment process. Even if the LGBTI respondents lack legal rights, they still explain that they can take some kind of control over their situation and become active actors of their own situation. However, it is still very challenging for LGBTI sex workers and it is a challenge for those who work for LGBTI rights.

Another challenge our respondents emphasized was reaching the rural sex workers. Reaching sex workers in rural areas and spreading the expertise and the peer support models that are used in Kampala could save lives. The interventions done in Kampala have proven to be effective; could these same methods be in use in the rural areas? The different activities and services that are provided in Kampala, especially the work done in the slums like Bwaise, could be directly converted also to rural parts of Uganda. What makes the sex work activism successful in Kampala is good leadership, local support and the complementary support that is

provided by the sex work friendly organizations. This is of course linked to the challenge with funds. The lack of funds is a serious hindrance for the sex work activist movement to grow and develop. Often in social work creating the networks and reaching marginalized client groups and build trust in such communities is a constant struggle. In the case of sex workers in Kampala that work is already well in progress. Having more funds to the activities and having paid staff in the future could bring the movement to the next level. This requires help from outside funders.

On a more structural level, we saw how the system of public shaming is a part of oppression and creates a dangerous scene for sex workers. Sex workers become more marginalized and we realized that this part of structural oppression was a big challenge and a threat for the sex workers. In the process of sex workers getting empowered and their dreams of social change to be reached, more actors need to look at their own part of the oppression. In an unjust society, everyone has to look at their roles in making it a more accepting society. There are parts in the Ugandan culture and norms that are not encouraging human rights, which are not empowering the people. There are several actors, like the media and the police that are directly oppressing the marginalized groups. They already have a lot of power and the ability to influence. For a better society the media and police should use the power in a right way: to make vulnerable people less vulnerable, to fight against discrimination instead of using it to gain more power. In order to create social change and have a more tolerant society, other actors need to acknowledge their part of the oppression. The challenges that the sex workers face in Kampala: stigma, discrimination, lack of legal protection, safety, shortcomings in social justice, unfriendly or hostile working environments are issues that sex workers encounter globally. We strongly believe that social work practitioners in Uganda should unite with the sex work activists to find ways to battle poverty, oppression and HIV.

9.5 Feminism and sex work

We will end the analysis chapter by looking at sex work from a more feminist viewpoint. It is important, especially when it comes to sex work and values of what a woman should be. One can first of all question if the sex workers would be as stigmatized and marginalized if it was a job done by men in the first place. Sex work challenges traditional norms and views about sexuality. As mentioned in our results and also by Bandyopadhyay et al. (2006), we have to look at the stigma that comes with being a sex worker. Challenging the cultural norms and the womens roles in the society is needed in order to give sex workers acceptance in the society.

Women have always suffered from patriarchal discrimination and sex work can be seen as a part of it, or in this case, the laws can be seen as a result from it. One can question the purpose of the Ugandan laws against sex work, in the results we have mostly found the laws to be a way of controlling sex workers and a way for the police to practice their power. Holmström (2015) explains how sex work has two different paradigms, one being the oppression paradigm, where sex workers are looked at as negative to the society and peoples sexuality. The Ugandan legal framework targets the sex workers and mainly functions as a control mechanism, which can be linked to the oppression paradigm, where sex work is seen as something that has a negative influence on the society. Especially the law about living on the earnings of prostitution can be seen as a controlling law challenging the sex workers ability to provide for their families. It might have started out as a pimping-law, but in the end it targets families and children since they are the ones who live on the earnings of prostitution. A law

controlling the pimps and brothel owners should not target children. If decreasing the pimps influence and ending sex work is the goal, there must be a better way to proceed.

It is not only the laws that make the sex workers vulnerable. It is the traditional patriarchal system in Uganda that also affects sex workers and women in general. In a society where women are the main care takes and men the breadwinners (Spitzer et al., 2014) limit the womens possibilities to live an independent life. The traditional role, as a housewife doesn't fit all women, some of the sex workers we met were single with kids, many had been used by men and others had chosen not to get married. Sex work can be a way for these women to liberate themselves from the dependence of men and jobs with very low salaries. In our results we also found out that many LGBTI persons lack support and end up in the outskirts of the society due to the same cultural norms. Twikirize (in Spitzer et al., 2014) emphasized that women in Africa need more than a salary, they also need empowerment programs in order to get a more equal position in the society. We question if this is enough? Is it purely the women who need training, not men who need awareness? Payne (2014) explains that in a feminist context, it is also important to involve the men in process. Challenging sexuality and the patriarchal society in Uganda, men need to start questioning their part in the oppressive system.

NGOs constantly try to come up with realistic alternatives for sex workers through different exit programs. But these programs are many times very not as feministic as they seem. It might feel like one is helping a poor woman out of exploitation by buying them a sewing machine. Yenwen (2005) questions the victimizing picture of looking at sex workers as mainly forced by poverty. Looking at sex workers as victims won't help them. Sex workers need to be the ones defining their own problems, and they should also be there to create the exit-programs, when there is a need for such programs. Nagle (1997) mentions the need of feminists to see sex work as work, and this is an example of how victimizing sex workers in the end will work against them. In order to help sex workers, one needs to look at the structural oppression as well.

Security is a challenge in the business of sex work. Female and LGBTI persons have higher risk to experience violence and sexual abuse than heterosexual men in sex work. This is a great concern from a feminist viewpoint, men's violence against women. The interest of safer working environments for sex workers should be a priority to all feminists. Many sex workers we met considered themselves to be feminists. But they also explained how they felt excluded from the feminist-movement that is taking place in Uganda. Even as activists, they were still a while ago not invited to the different seminars and workshops about feminism, even if it would have been relevant for them. Why is if the feminist-movement in Uganda leaving some women behind?

9.6 Summary

By exploring our findings that are linked to the theories one can see that the activists do advanced social work through their different activities. Linking the findings to our main questions, how activism can be understood in terms of social work we will go back and look at the principles of social work. Key principles of social work are social justice, human rights, empowerment and liberation (IFSW and IASSW, 2004). These are all implemented in the work the sex work activists do together with sex work friendly organizations. The sex workers are demanding social justice and liberation, and are getting there by using empowerment and creating awareness in the communities. The activists are the voices of the

sex work field, advocating for the less empowered sex workers rights. Social work is done, but not by professional social workers. To reach and empower marginalized groups, social workers have a lot to learn from grass root social work done by the marginalized groups themselves. We need to stop looking at ourselves as the experts and develop mutual learning-methods, where the service users are lifted up. Like the sex workers told us, “Nothing about us without us”.

The sex work activists are acknowledging the oppressive structures and they are working towards social change. When it comes to the question if the sex work activism has created social change we can definitely argue that it has changed the sex work scene, and through linking their work as activists to other actors, such as lawyers and health care facilities, they have changed the reality of many sex workers. The sex workers in Kampala can now claim legal justice, they have condoms, the police brutality has decreased, they cooperate with brothel owners to keep their work environment safer, they have STI-prevention and family-planning, they work with local leaders and priests that support them and most of all, they have created an important network through peer support making them stronger together. This has created a better working environment to many sex workers and impacted positively in their wellbeing. The sex work activist movement has created social change.

CHAPTER TEN: EPILOGUE

We have written this study to document and understand the present situation of the sex work activist scene. The findings are highly positive what comes to the peer support mechanisms, multi professional networks and being engaged in the political arenas. This says something about professional social work in general. Eliminating the moralistic and normative approach to clients would bring social workers closer to marginalized groups. Inclusion and respect for those outside the society should be a top priority. Social workers should be in the frontline fighting for the rights of the voiceless. This brings us back to activists, who have managed to reach those who have lost their trust in the official support systems. The activists have done a lot to the realities of sex workers and gone a long way from the start. Now the question is how will the movement proceed? How will sex work activism shape itself? Now that the sex work movement has found its form and good practices of working, the challenge will be the sustainability of the movement and further development of the services.

Many factors play a vital role on how the movement will develop in the future. The Ugandan political scene is one crucial part of how the sex work movement can or will change. The government lacks expertise about sex workers and seems reluctant to cooperate with activists. We find both the Ugandan legislation and the way the laws are used problematic. If the Ugandan government truly wants to work towards zero new HIV- infections, they will have to start cooperating with the sex workers. If Uganda's goal is zero new infections, they have to address and include the most at risk populations in the dialogue and interventions.

In a growing activist movement like in Kampala there will be inner conflicts and discussions when the movement is trying to find its direction. We consider this inevitable and very natural. Through healthy conflicts the movement can grow and proceed, finding compromises will be crucial when many passionate and strong individuals try to find a consensus. Staying together and to continue cooperating closely with the LGBTI movement will most probably bring best results for both parties. Together they are stronger.

Funding is another question mark that will impact on the direction of the movement. Lack of resources is a sad factor that threatens the activist movement. Donors might have different demands and visions that can compromise the autonomy of sex workers. This is interesting, since the sex workers manage themselves very well and have until now kept a high level of self-governance in their actions. When it comes to donors, global or Ugandan, there can be conflicts of interest. The movement needs more funds in order to pursue their dream of expanding the peer support to other parts of Uganda. We hope that they get that financial aid because they have built networks and they reach an impressive number of grass root sex workers that are quite difficult to target with classic professional social work. The peer support methods are well formulated and through practice proven to work with this specific marginalized group. Our hope is that the sex work movement will stay autonomous even with several outside donors. That will keep the interest and real needs of sex workers in the center.

We couldn't help noticing the absence of professional social workers in the field. Even though the aim of the research was not to focus on social workers, we still often asked the sex workers what kind of help they get from the official sector. The picture we got was that the help is very little to none in many districts. We are aware that social workers work in some of the sex work friendly health care facilities, which is great, but otherwise the support is

minimal. We have a fear that social workers in Uganda are strongly influenced by morals and sexual norms in the country and therefore don't succeed in reaching some of the most vulnerable groups in the society. Have the social workers in Uganda failed the people they should fight for, or is it the education of social sciences that is not focusing enough on critical social work? Social workers should work with the oppressed and disadvantaged people in all different layers of the society in order to create a more inclusive and open Uganda where everyone is equal. Human rights advocacy for the stigmatized and oppressed groups like sex workers should be a mandatory part of social work practice.

The power of activism. We hope that the readers of this thesis will grasp even a little bit of the mighty feeling of togetherness and the burning will to make social change that we witnessed in Uganda. It all comes down to hope and strong solidarity of the sex workers. That is the core and beauty of the Kampala sex work movement.

That is social work.

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APPENDIX ONE: INTERVIEW GUIDLINE PARALEGAL TRAINING

PART 1

INTRODUCTION

CAN YOU TELL ME A LITTLE BIT ABOUT YOUSELF

EDUCATION

AGE

NATIONALITY

GENDER

FAMILY STATUS

PART 2

ORGANIZATION

WHAT IS PARALEGAL TRAINING?

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO ACHIEVE WITH PARALEGAL TRAINING?

WHY IS PARALEGAL TRAINING IMPORTANT?

WHAT IS THE REASON BEHIND THE PARALEGAL TRAINING?

WHEN HAVE YOU STARTED WITH PARALEGAL TRAINING?

HOW MANY PARALEGALS IS THERE?

HOW MANY DIFFERENT GROUPS DO YOU TARGET WHEN IT COMES TO PARALEGAL TRAINING? DO YOU TRAIN OTHER GROUPS AS WELL?

ARE THERE OTHER ORGANIZATIONS THAT DELIVER A SIMILAR SERVICE TO THIS CLIENT GROUP IN KAMPALA?

HOW DO YOU CO-OPERATE WITH THE OFFICIALS (STATE OWNED SERVICES/POLICE/ETC.)?

HOW IS THE PARALEGAL FINANCED?

PART 3

SERVICE USER QUESTIONS

WHEN IT COMES TO PARALEGAL TRAINING WHAT ARE THE MAIN NEEDS OF THE CLIENT GROUP?

HOW DO YOU FIND YOUR CLIENTS?

CAN YOU DESCRIBE YOUR AVERAGE CLIENT?

IS THERE CLIENT-GROUPS WITHIN SEX WORK THAT ARE HARDER TO REACH? WHY?

CAN YOU DESCRIBE YOUR AVERAGE PARALEGAL THAT YOU TRAIN? IS IT A HOMOGENOUS GROUP?

WHAT KIND OF KNOWLEDGE BASE DOES AN AVERAGE CLIENT OF THIS ACTIVITY HAVE?

ARE THEY AWARE OF THEIR HUMAN RIGHTS? OR ANY LEGAL RIGHTS?

HOW DOES PEOPLE HERE FIND OUT ABOUT THEIR LEGAL RIGHTS? IS IT TAUGHT IN SCHOOL?

WHAT HAS BEEN THE RESULT OF THE PARALEGAL TRAINING FOR YOU? HAS IT CHANGED YOU?

PART 4

ACTIVITY / INTERVENTION

HOW DOES THE SERVICE YOU OFFER LOOK LIKE?

HOW DOES THESE ACTIVITIES LEAD TO SOCIAL CHANGE?

HOW DOES THE PARALEGAL TRAINING LOOK LIKE?

WHAT KIND OF ACTIVITIES DO YOU OFFER THE PARALEGALS? / HOW DO YOU TRAIN THEM?

WHO CAN BECOME A PARALEGAL? IS THERE ANY QUALIFICATIONS THAT ARE NEEDED?

HOW DO YOU THINK PARALEGAL HAS CHANGED THE CLIENT GROUPS REALITY?

HAVE YOU SEEN ANY CHANGE IN THE CLIENT GROUPS KNOWLEDGE ABOUT THEIR RIGHTS?

DURING THE TIME THERE HAS BEEN PARALEGAL TRAINING, HAS THERE BEEN IMPROVEMENTS FOR SEX WORKERS RIGHTS?

IS THERE ANY DIFFERENCE BETWEEN HOW POLICE TREAT PARALEGALS, COMPARED TO “NORMAL PEOPLE”?

CAN PARALEGAL BE IMPLEMENTED IN OTHER MARGINALIZED GROUPS TO EMPOWER THEM? WHICH?

CAN YOU DESCRIBE A CASE THAT WAS SUCCESSFUL? WHY WAS IT SUCCESSFUL?

CAN YOU DESCRIBE A CASE THAT WAS NOT SUCCESSFUL, WHY WAS IT NOT SUCCESSFUL?

PART 5

FUTURE

DO YOU SEE ANY CHANGE FOR SEX WORKERS WHEN IT COMES TO LEGAL ISSUES IN THE NEARBY FUTURE?

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO ACHIEVE WITH PARALEGAL TRAINING?

WHAT KIND OF CHANGE DO YOU WANT TO ACHIEVE ON A STRUCTURAL LEVEL WITH THIS ACTIVITY?

HOW WOULD YOU AS A PARALEGAL LIKE THE RELATIONSHIP TO THE POLICE TO LOOK LIKE?

HOW DO YOU THINK YOU AS PARALEGALS HAVE TO CHANGE/IMPROVE IN ORDER TO CONTINUE EMPOWER SEX WORKERS?

WHAT DO YOU/THEY LACK? AND WHAT IS THE SEX WORKERS LACK? HOW CAN THIS CHANGE?

WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES FOR SEX WORKERS WHEN IT COMES TO LEGAL RIGHTS?

DO YOU THINK THE SEX WORK ACTIVISM, SUCH AS PARALEGALS HAS CHANGED THE FIELD AND THE SEX WORKERS RIGHTS?

PART 6

FOR THE SERVICE USER

HOW WOULD YOU DEFINE YOURSELF PROFESSIONALLY?

HOW DID YOU FIRST COME ACROSS SEX WORK PARALEGALS?

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN A SEX WORKER?

DESCRIBE HOW YOU EXPERIENCED THE INTERVENTION YOU GOT FROM THE
PARALEGAL... WHAT WAS YOUR IMPRESSION?

HOW DID YOU BENEFIT FROM THE PARALEGALS SUPPORT?

HOW HAS THE PARALEGALS IMPACTED YOU WHEN IT COMES TO YOUR PROFFESION
AND YOUR RIGHTS?

DO YOU THINK THE SEX WORK ACTIVISM, SUCH AS PARALEGALS HAS CHANGED THE
FIELD AND THE SEX WORKERS RIGHTS?

IN WHAT WAY DO YOU THINK SEX WORK ACTIVISM CAN IMPROVE? ARE THEY
LACKING SOMETHING?

APPENDIX TWO: INTERVIEW GUIDELINE PEER SUPPORT

PART 1

INTRODUCTION

CAN YOU TELL ME A LITTLE BIT ABOUT YOURSELF?

-EDUCATION

-AGE

-NATIONALITY

-GENDER

-FAMILY STATUS

PART 2

ORGANIZATION

WHO IS THE TARGET GROUP OF YOUR ORGANIZATION?

HOW MANY SEX WORKERS DO YOU REACH WITH YOUR ORGANIZATION?

WHEN HAVE YOU STARTED WITH PEER SUPPORT?

WHAT IS THE IDEOLOGY BEHIND PEER SUPPORT? / WHAT IS THE REASON WHY IT IS NEEDED?

OR

WHY IS PEER SUPPORT IMPORTANT?

WHAT IS INCLUDED IN EDUCATION THE PEER HELPERS?

HOW MANY PEER HELPERS ARE PARTICIPATING IN YOUR ORGANIZATION?

HOW DO YOU CO-OPERATE WITH THE OFFICIALS (STATE OWNED SERVICES/POLICE/ETC.)?

HOW ARE YOUR ACTIVITIES FINANCED?

ARE THERE OTHER ORGANIZATIONS THAT DELIVER A SIMILAR SERVICE TO THIS CLIENT GROUP IN KAMPALA?

PART 3

ABOUT THE SERVICE USER

WHAT ARE THE MAIN NEEDS OF THE SEX WORKERS WHO DELIVER THE PEER SUPPORT PROGRAMME?

CAN YOU DESCRIBE YOUR AVERAGE SEX WORKER WHO YOU REACH WITH YOUR ACTIVITIES?

WHICH SUB GROUPS OF SEX WORKERS ARE EASIER TO REACH? WHY?

WHICH SUB GROUPS OF SEX WORKERS ARE MORE DIFFICULT TO REACH? WHY?

WHAT KIND OF KNOWLEDGE BASE DOES AN AVERAGE CLIENT OF THIS ACTIVITY HAVE?

HOW WELL ARE THE SEX WORKERS AWARE OF THEIR SOCIAL AND CIVIL RIGHTS?

HOW WELL ARE THE SEX WORKERS AWARE OF THEIR HUMAN RIGHTS?

PART 4

ACTIVITY / INTERVENTION

HOW IS PEER SUPPORT DONE IN YOUR ACTIVITY?

HOW CAN YOU BECOME A PEER SUPPORTER?

WHAT ARE THE QUALITIES OF A PEER SUPPORTER?

WHAT ARE THE KEY FACTORS AFFECTING IN SAFER SEX WORK IN YOUR PEER SUPPORT ACTIVITY?

WHICH AREAS OF SAFER SEX WORK DO YOU PRIORITIZE IN YOUR ACTIVITY? (AND)

HOW IS THAT TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT IN OUR ACTIVITY?

CAN THIS MODEL OF PEER SUPPORT BE IMPLEMENTED IN OTHER MARGINALIZED GROUPS? WHICH?

CAN YOU DESCRIBE A CASE THAT WAS SUCCESSFUL IN PEER SUPPORT?

CAN YOU DESCRIBE A CASE THAT WAS NOT SO SUCCESSFUL? WHAT WAS THE REASONS TO THAT?

HOW DO THESE ACTIVITIES LEAD TO SOCIAL CHANGE?

PART 5

FUTURE AND ACTIVISM

WHAT KIND OF CHANGE DO YOU WANT TO ACHIEVE WITH YOUR ACTIVISM ON A STRUCTURAL LEVEL?

IN WHICH WAY DO YOU THINK THE SEX WORK ACTIVISM HAS IMPROVED THE CONDITIONS OF SEX WORKERS IN KAMPALA?

WHAT ARE THE FUTURE CHALLENGES OF PEER SUPPORT IN THE FIELD OF SEX WORK IN KAMPALA?

HOW DO YOU SEE THE FUTURE OF SEX WORK ACTIVISM IN KAMPALA?

HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO DEVELOP THE PEER SUPPORT MODEL IN THE COMING YEARS?

PART 6

FOR THE SERVICE USER

HOW WOULD YOU DEFINE YOURSELF PROFESSIONALLY?

HOW DID YOU FIRST COME ACROSS SEX WORK PEER SUPPORTERS?

WHAT WAS YOUR FIRST IMPRESSION OF THE PEER SUPPORTERS?

HOW HAVE YOU EXPERIENCED THE SEX WORK PEER SUPPORT?

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN A SEX WORKER?

WHAT KIND OF ACTIVITIES OR INTERVENTIONS HAVE YOU BENEFITED FROM?

HOW HAVE YOU BEEN MET BY THE PEER SUPPORTERS?

HOW HAS THE PEER SUPPORT IMPACTED IN YOU PERSONALLY WHEN IT COMES TO YOUR PROFESSION? AND YOUR RIGHTS?

APPENDIX THREE: THE UGANDAN LAWS

136. Person living on earnings of prostitution.

(1) Every person who knowingly lives wholly or in part on the earnings of prostitution and every person who in any place solicits or importunes for immoral purposes commits an offence and is liable to imprisonment for seven years.

(2) Where a person is proved to live with or to be habitually in the company of a prostitute or is proved to have exercised control, direction or influence over the movements of a prostitute in such a manner as to show that he or she is aiding, abetting or compelling his or her prostitution with any other person, or generally, that person shall, unless he or she shall satisfy the court to the contrary, be deemed to be knowingly living on the earnings of prostitution.

137. Brothels.

Any person who keeps a house, room, set of rooms or place of any kind for purposes of prostitution commits an offence and is liable to imprisonment for seven years.

138. Definition of prostitute and prostitution.

In this Code, “prostitute” means a person who, in public or elsewhere, regularly or habitually holds himself or herself out as available for sexual intercourse or other sexual gratification for monetary or other material gain, and “prostitution” shall be construed accordingly

139. Prohibition of prostitution.

Any person who practises or engages in prostitution commits an offence and is liable to imprisonment for seven years.

168. Rogues and vagabonds.

(1) Every—

- (a) person convicted of an offence under section 167 after having been previously convicted as an idle and disorderly person;
- (b) person going about as a gatherer or collector of alms, or endeavouring to procure charitable contributions of any nature or kind, under any false or fraudulent pretence;
- (c) suspected person or reputed thief who has no visible means of subsistence and cannot give a good account of himself or herself; and
- (d) person found wandering in or upon or near any premises or in

any road or highway or any place adjacent thereto or in any public place at such time and under such circumstances as to lead to the conclusion that such person is there for an illegal or disorderly purpose,
shall be deemed to be a rogue and vagabond, and commits a misdemeanour and is liable for the first offence to imprisonment for six months, and for every subsequent offence to imprisonment for one year.

APPENDIX FOUR: INTRODUCTION OF OUR RESPONDENTS

Raj

Raj is a bisexual sex work activist. Raj is well known in the LGBTI and sex work-community. Raj is in his late 20's, he grew up in a middle class home but was thrown out because of his sexual orientation. Raj is a devoted paralegal and has been doing paralegal for a few years. Raj is studying at the university with the money he earns from sex work. He does not want to stop being a sex worker when he is finished at the university, but hope to be able to combine another job with sex work.

Lucy

Lucy comes from the countryside. She is a member of WONETHA and has been trained to be a paralegal through them. Lucy is in the late twenties and a single mother. She has been a sex worker for about five years. Lucy left her home village but had trouble supporting herself when she came to Kampala. Her friend that she stayed with convinced her to start working as a sex worker. Doing sex work, she came in contact with WONETHA who helped her with information and condoms. She joined them and they taught her English, she has been a paralegal for a year.

Anne

Anne left her village to move to Kampala when she was in her late teens. One of the reasons was poverty in the family. She moved to Kampala in hope to make money. However, working at a restaurant did not even cover her daily expenses. She stayed with a friend who had money and told her she sold sex. Anne hesitated in the beginning, but in the end her need for money made her start selling sex. She is now in her twenties and found out about WONETHA through their outreaches. She has been a paralegal for a year.

Maria

Maria is a lawyer at HRAPF. She finished law school five years ago and joined HRAPF the same year. Maria is the head of the paralegal program and the one who is responsible for the trainings. Maria is also the person the paralegals call when they need legal help and the one who defends them in court.. Maria has, during her years at HRAPF become an important ally of the sex workers and explains that she is not only their lawyer, but also their friend.

Kim

Kim is in her mid-twenties and a transgender woman. She is a devoted HIV and LGBTI-spokesperson. Kim grew up in a village and was thrown out of her home by her family when they found out she was transsexual. She moved to Kampala and started to sell sex in order to support herself. Being a transsexual woman who sells sex, Kim has been arrested and abused by the police several times. She has therefore experience of how it is to get help from paralegals. Kim is a well-known among sex workers since she has done peer support for many years now and she has experience of both developing and delivering support services to sex workers in Kampala.

Amina

Amina is around 30 years old, a single mother, a female sex worker, a feminist and sex work activist. She is active in an organization targeting female sex workers as well as bisexual sex workers. She has many years of experience of developing and delivering peer support services for sex workers and she is one of the most known actors on the sex work activist scene.

Winnie and Stella (Interviewed together)

Winnie is active in an organization targeting HIV positive sex worker women. She is in her late twenties, and a single mother. She has been a sex worker for almost ten years. Stella works together with Winnie in the same organization. She is also a single parent. She has been in the sex industry for around five years. They have both many years of experience of sex work activism in Kampala with vulnerable sex workers in the slum areas.

Olivia

Olivia is active in a sex worker led organization, and has long background of peer support and developing support services and trainings. She is a sex work activist in her late twenties and a proud sex worker.

APPENDIX FIVE: MAP OF SEX WORK ORGANIZATIONS

MAP OF SEX WORK ACTIVISM IN KAMPALA SPRING 2015

